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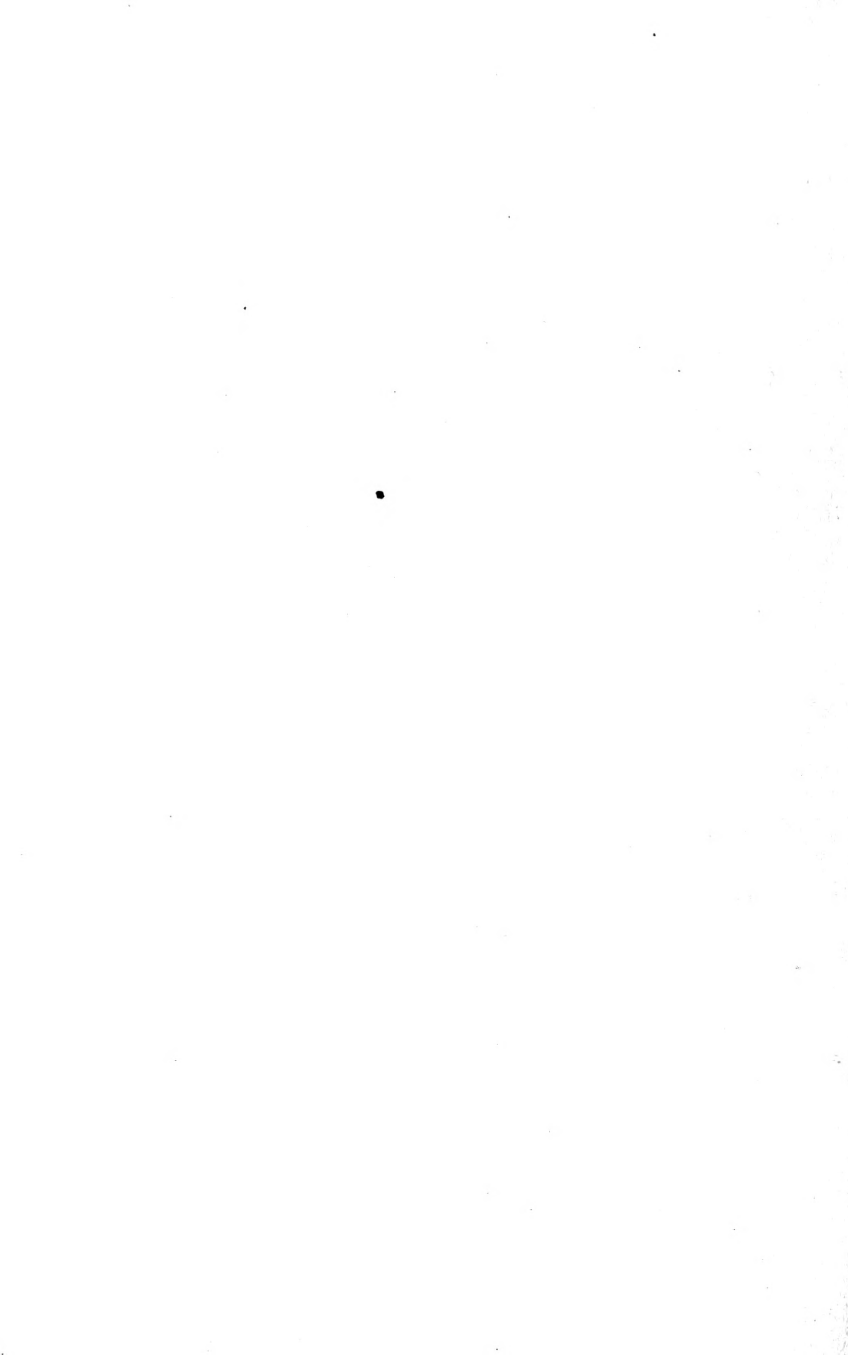


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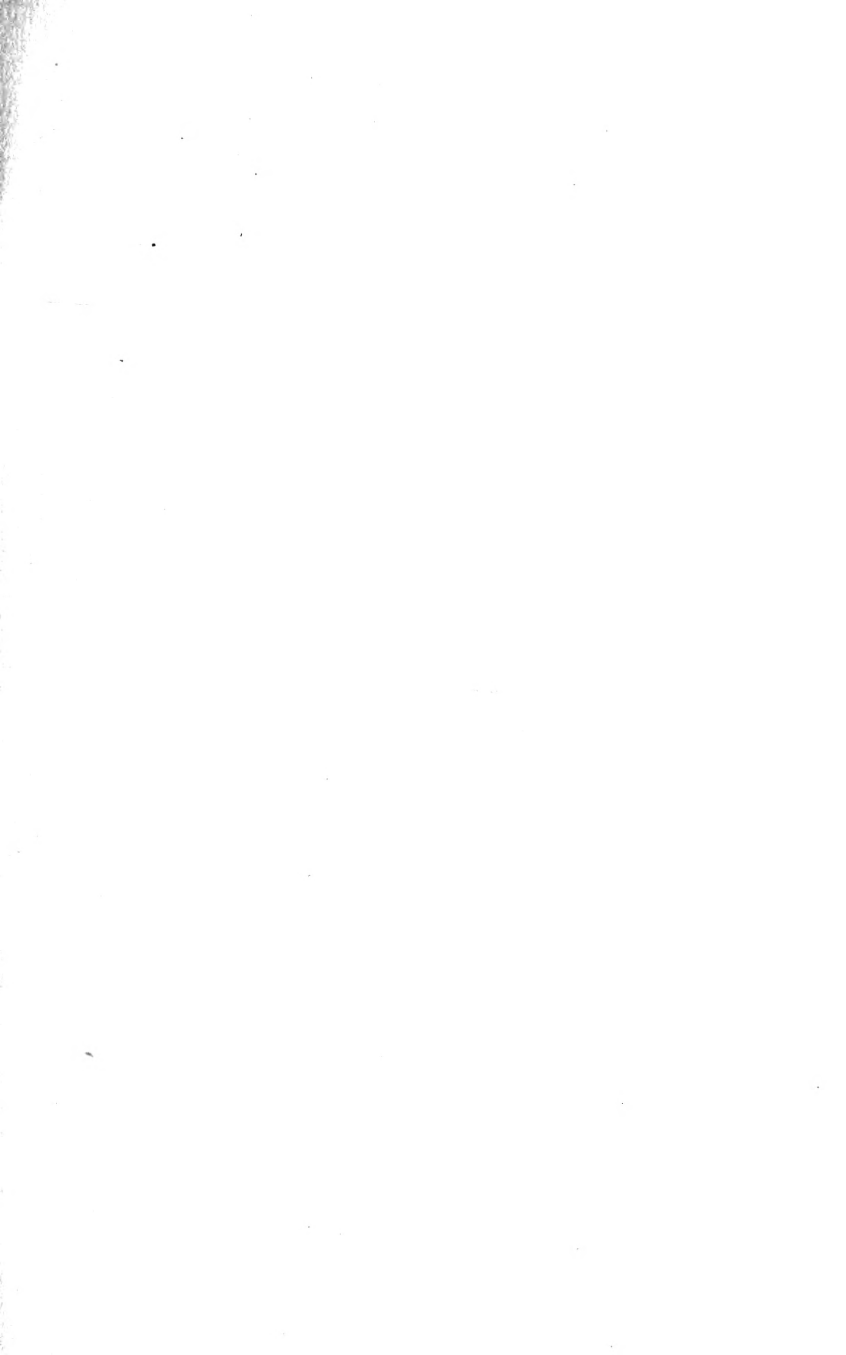
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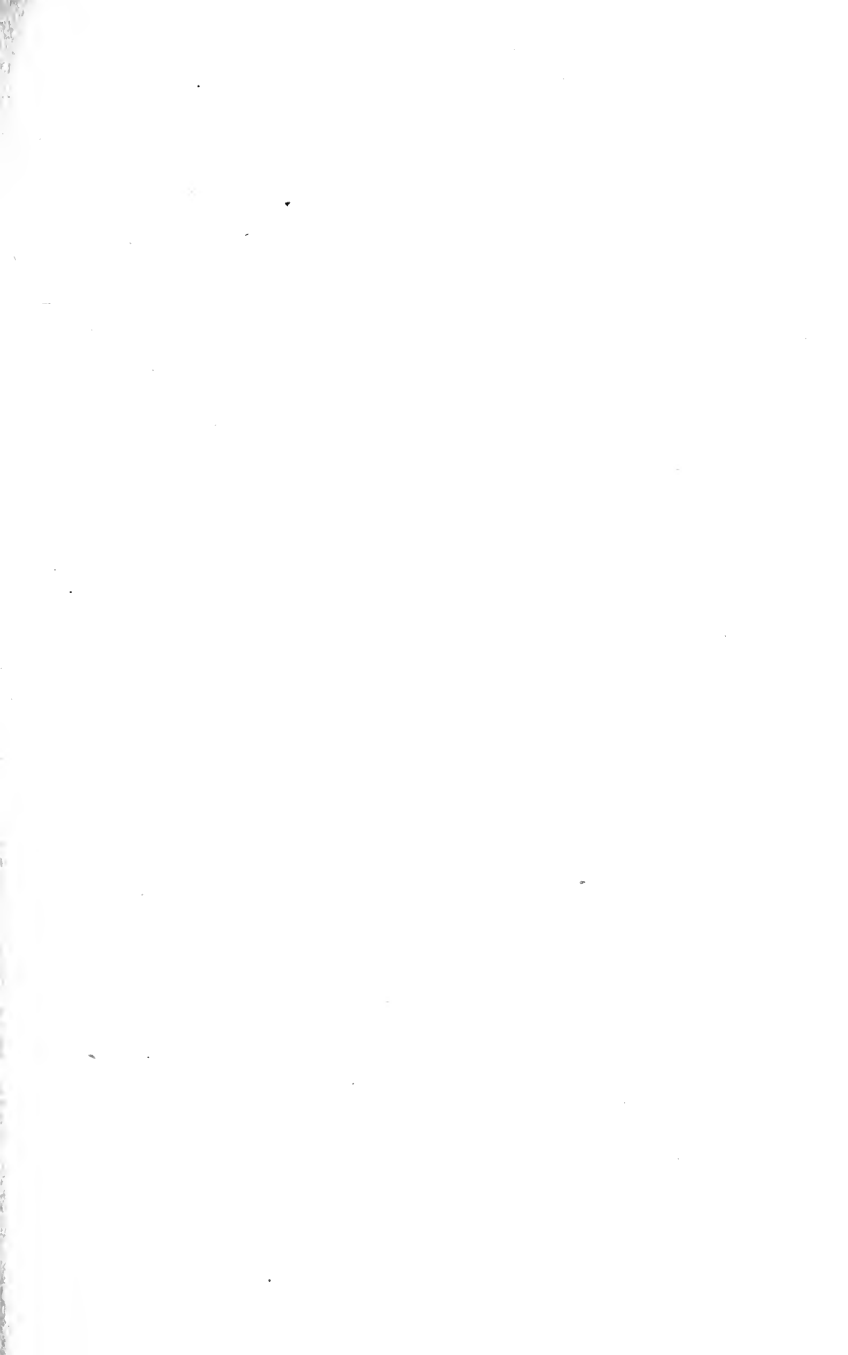
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THE WORKS OF  
DONALD G. MITCHELL

AMERICAN  
LANDS AND LETTERS

LEATHER-STOCKING TO  
POE'S "RAVEN"



CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS  
NEW YORK ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ 1907

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS



TO THE LITTLE GROUP  
OF GRANDCHILDREN  
BORN AND BRED UPON THE SHORES OF  
THAT GREAT LAKE  
WHERE THEY BUILD CITIES AND BURN THEM—  
AND BUILD EXHIBITION PALACES  
(WHICH OUTSHINE ALL EXHIBITS)  
I DEDICATE  
THIS SECOND VOLUME OF AMERICAN TALKS  
TRUSTING IT MAY FIND  
A KINDLY READING IN THEIR HUSTLING WESTERN WORLD  
AND SPUR THEM TO KEEP ALIVE THAT TRAIL  
OF HOME JOURNEYINGS INTO THESE EASTERN QUIETUDES  
UNDER THE TREES  
WHICH WE GRAYHEADS LOVE

D. G. M.

EDGEWOOD, June, 1899



## PREFACE

THIS record begins with times when the wrathful independence of General Jackson made itself heard in Congressional corridors and when young ears were listening eagerly for new foot-falls of the brave "Leather-Stocking" in the paths of American woods; and it closes with the lugubrious and memorable notes of the *Raven* of Poe.

I had hoped to extend the record to embrace many another honored American name—whose birth-date belongs to the second decade of the present century. But the "tale" of four hundred pages of text which confronts me is a warning to stay the pen. A great welter of provisionary notes, upon the table beside me, carries dates, memoranda, hints, and many an explosive jet of comment respecting the bounding brilliancies of the Beecher family—the staid, orderly journeyman work of such as the Duyckincks or of Tuckerman; odd whiles, too, there flashes through this welter of notes, touches of the lambent humor of Saxe, or of

## PREFACE

Frederic Cozzens; we hear the click of Henry Herbert's reel, interchanging with the click of his Oxford classicism, and that further click of the pistol, which (by his own hand) wrought his death.

We have glimpses of that handsome New Englander Motley, who—tiring of effort to kindle romance on "Merry-Mount"—went over seas to light up great Dutch levels with historic fires—lurid at times—but always high, and shining and fine. Then lifts into view that notable group of writers which, toward the close of the second decade of the century, came, within the same twelvemonth (1819), upon the stage of life. Among these were Dr. Parsons—hardly yet accredited his due laurels of song; Whipple, also—turning his protuberant eyes, full of keen discernment, upon all ranges of work, and reporting thereupon in language that flowed like a river. J. G. Holland was another who put New England flavors into a clever "Bitter-Sweet" verse, and into his "Poor Richard" prose, the exaltations of common-sense. Melville—of whom we have had brief speech—was among these "Nineteeners," and gave a lively Munchausen relish to his stories of the Southern Seas. The "good, gray" poet, Whitman was a boy when these

## PREFACE

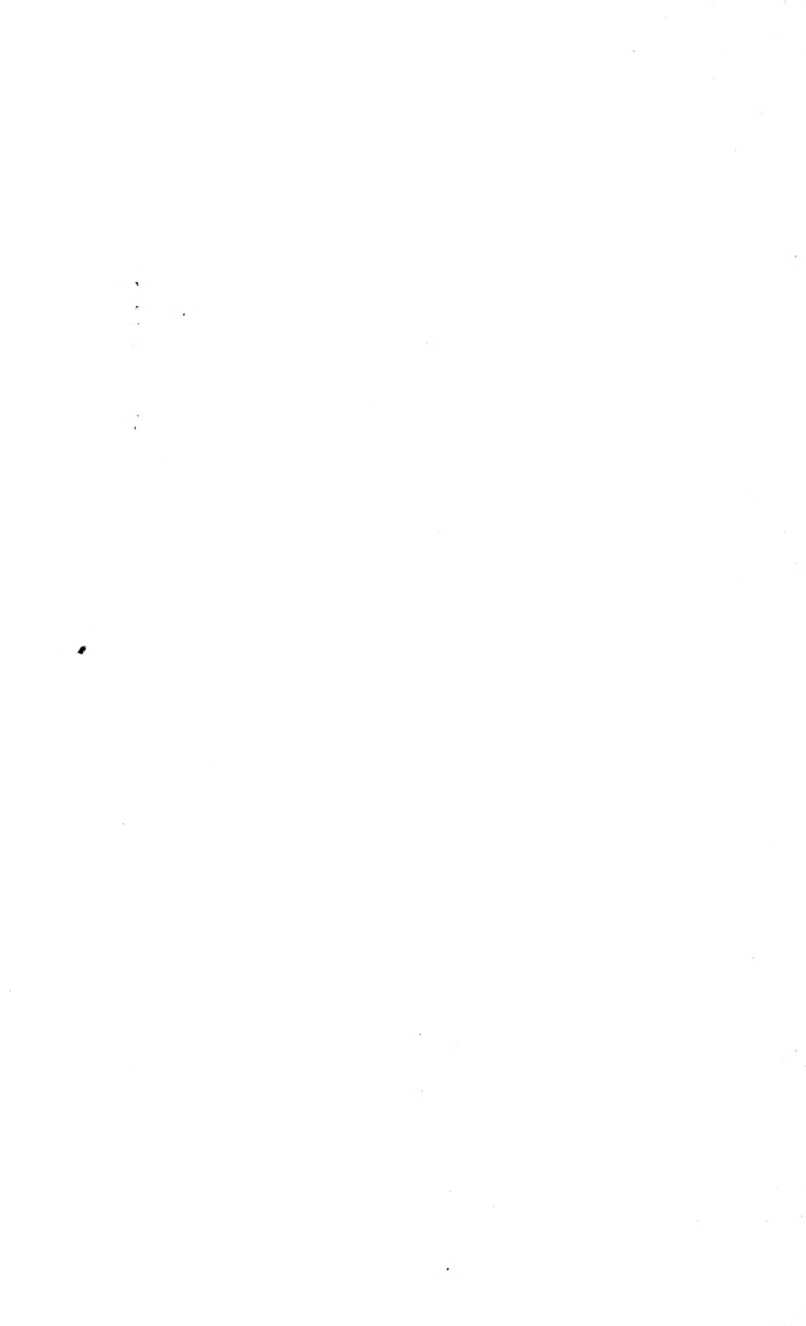
were boys, and never saw suffering without himself suffering; if he gather coarse weeds into his "Leaves of Grass," we forget and forgive it when he doffs his cap, in reverent and courtly fashion to "My Captain."

Last of this group is that dominant figure among them who joined to poetic graces the large tact of a diplomat, and who (as the observant and entertaining Dr. Hale has recently shown to us) by his tender and gracious humanities made "the man Lowell" a worthier personage than even Lowell the poet.

That budget of memoranda within which I see the kindly light on these names—and other such—come and go, I turn over and put away, and handle again—loath to part wholly with them—yearning a little to say more than an old man should be permitted to say.

*Allons donc!* let us lay our dead notes to cover, without ever a whimper; and we will listen, with the rest, to the new and younger and keener talkers; these may bring to the work a larger familiarity with the subject, or fuller knowledge; but not—surely—a more earnest love for things and men American, or a sharper resolve to tell only the truth.

EDGEWOOD, June, 1899.



# CONTENTS

CHAPTER I	PAGE
IN NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA . . . . .	4
OTHER CITIES, INNS AND LIBRARIES . . . . .	9
TWO GEORGIANS . . . . .	14
FROM WEST TO EAST . . . . .	16
POET BANCROFT . . . . .	18
ROUND HILL SCHOOL . . . . .	22
LIBRARIAN COGSWELL . . . . .	25
BANCROFT AS POLITICIAN AND HISTORIAN . . . . .	27
OFFICE-HOLDER AND DIPLOMAT . . . . .	31
GEORGE P. MARSH . . . . .	35
HOME AND SECOND EMBASSY . . . . .	39
CHAPTER II . . . . .	46
HORACE BUSHNELL . . . . .	47
A VITAL PREACHER . . . . .	50
THE MAN AND THE ARTIST . . . . .	56
A MAN OF OTHER METTLE . . . . .	62
JOURNALIST AND MAN OF THE WORLD . . . . .	66

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
LONDON, OWEGO, AND IDLEWILD . . . . .	70
THREE NEW YORKERS . . . . .	75
SOUTHRONS AND DR. WARE . . . . .	78
 CHAPTER III . . . . .	83
A NEW ENGLAND SAGE . . . . .	84
EMERSON AT CONCORD . . . . .	88
EARLY EXPERIENCES AND UTTERANCES . . . . .	92
GEORGE RIPLEY AND BROOK FARM . . . . .	98
OTHER BROOK-FARMERS AND SYMPATHIZERS . . . . .	103
TWO DOCTORS . . . . .	104
FULLER-OSSOLI . . . . .	108
ALCOTT OF THE ORPHIC SAYINGS . . . . .	114
CONCORD AGAIN . . . . .	116
 CHAPTER IV . . . . .	123
HAWTHORNE . . . . .	124
COLLEGE MATES AND ASSOCIATIONS . . . . .	129
FROM COLLEGE TO MANSE . . . . .	131
THE SURVEYORSHIP AND LIFE AT LENOX . . . . .	139
LIFE IN BERKSHIRE . . . . .	143
RELIGIOUS QUALITIES IN HAWTHORNE . . . . .	146
NEW CHANGES . . . . .	148
HAWTHORNE'S PERSONALITY . . . . .	150
EUROPEAN LIFE . . . . .	156
HOME AGAIN AND THE END . . . . .	159



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER V . . . . .	165
A NATURALIST . . . . .	167
REFORMER AND WRITER . . . . .	170
THOREAU'S LATER REPUTATION . . . . .	172
A POET'S YOUTH . . . . .	175
A HARVARD PROFESSOR . . . . .	178
LATER WORK AND YEARS . . . . .	182
ANOTHER NEW ENGLANDER . . . . .	188
A HALF-KNOWN AUTHOR . . . . .	196
 CHAPTER VI . . . . .	 202
POET AND PROFESSOR . . . . .	203
AS AUTOCRAT . . . . .	209
SOME OTHER DOCTORS . . . . .	216
HORACE GREELEY . . . . .	219
THE CHAPPAQUA FARM . . . . .	223
BRED IN THE PURPLE . . . . .	226
SOLDIER AND POET . . . . .	230
PHILADELPHIA TO NEW YORK . . . . .	235
FORDHAM AND CLOSING SCENES . . . . .	239



## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS



# AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

## CHAPTER I

OUR new story of 'American Lands and Letters brings us upon scenes and experiences which belonged to the opening years of the third decade of the present century. Monroe's "era of good feeling" was drawing to a close. Florida, only recently acquired from Spain (1821), gave to the United States control of all the Gulf shores from Key West to the Sabine River. The city of Washington had fairly recovered from the ugly British burning of the Capitol and library (1814); and the great, dusty spaces of its avenues and Mall were enlivened by the political groups which were massing around such crystallizing centres as John Quincy Adams, or General Jackson, or De Witt Clinton, or Calhoun. The wily Martin Van Buren and his Albany Regency were beginning to be topics of talk at "Gadsby's" in these days; and so were those "infant industries" which sought and secured tender tariff-coddling at the hands

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

of such trained nurses as Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, and which have since bravely cast their swaddling clothes, and can urge their own claims for nourishment—roundly and jinglingly.

### IN NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA

AFTER the burning of the Capitol and its books, the Government had purchased, at a price which was not one-fourth of its value, the library of ex-President Jefferson; and the old gentleman (who thus provided the nucleus of that vast agglomeration of books now known as the Congressional Library) survived many years thereafter, and in tottering age assisted at the inauguration (1825) of that University of Virginia—lying in a beautiful lap of the Blue Ridge region—whose foundation and up-building the veteran statesman had year by year inspected and approved.

Jefferson was not apt in finances, and there were fears that his liberalities and lack of caution in his later days would bring him to poverty; but brave and generous ones came to his relief. Among them that Philip Hone,<sup>1</sup> one-

<sup>1</sup> Philip Hone, b. 1781; d. 1851. His *Journal*, etc., edited by Bayard Tuckerman, New York, 1889, 2 vols. 8vo, has in it very much of lively interest.

## DAVID HOSACK

time (1826) Mayor of New York, who in 1822 purchased a fine house (for \$25,000) on Broadway, opposite that end of the city park where the great Post-office now cumbers the ground; but where trees and grass grew then, with a tall wooden paling about them, over which the Mayor and his guests (of whom he had always abundance) saw the fresh splendor of the marble City Hall.

Dr. Hosack<sup>1</sup> too, at his elegant Chambers Street home, vied in that day with the last-named gentleman in the entertainment of strangers of distinction; and his famous Saturday evening parties were known far and wide.

Between 1820 and 1830, before yet the railway was a great helper of travel, the swiftest mail-carrier between Philadelphia and New York would reckon upon some twelve hours as the measure of his speed; and it was counted quite a wonderful event when Cooper, the actor, who had a fine house upon the banks of the Schuylkill, undertook to play on alternate nights in such far-apart places as Philadelphia and New York!

<sup>1</sup>David Hosack, b. 1769; d. 1835. In addition to professional works of repute he published *Memoirs of De Witt Clinton* and *Hortus Elginensis*, a valued account of his garden plants.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

The savors of the *Portfolio*,<sup>1</sup> made famous by the loyalist Joseph Dennie, had left a lingering fragrance in the Quaker City. Robert Walsh, Jr., a trenchant journalist, long known afterward as our Consul at Paris, was at work there; so was the biographer<sup>2</sup> of the Signers of the Declaration, who gave later such attractive liveliness to his "American in Paris," of which a brother wit said, with clever mensuration—"t was the only book of travels he knew which was, at once, too broad, and not long enough."

He had a taste for the table and its enticements, as strong, as piquant, and as searching as his taste for the blandishments of pretty women and engaging toilettes. There are descriptions of Parisian dinners in his *American in Paris* which fairly scintillate with provocatives of appetite and with constellations of cookery; all the more tempting was his talk of Apician delicacies, since it was broidered and savored by abounding Latinity and by pungent

<sup>1</sup> Finally given up in 1827. In its later years it had many funny examples of art, on steel and copper, in illustration of Fenimore Cooper, and others.

<sup>2</sup> John Sanderson, of the High School, Philadelphia, b. 1783; d. 1844. *Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence*, Philadelphia, 1820-27; *American in Paris*, 1834.



## THE CAREYS

Roman flavors swirling down on classic tides from the days of Lucullus.

The "Wistar parties" were then in vogue in Philadelphia, keeping alive the memory of a distinguished physician, whose name has even now large literary significance, besides pretty reminders in the clustered tassels of the blooming *Wistaria*. As early as 1821, old Matthew Carey (of Irish birth and book-making repute) had retired from the headship of his book-house on Chestnut Street in favor of his son Henry C. Carey,<sup>1</sup> a bright, shrewd, black-eyed, and dominant man, who wrote afterward, with much *chic* and thorough thinking, on economic subjects, and whose house became famous for its entertainments and for its "offerings" of excellent Rhine wine.

This house of Carey, under some one of its Protean names,<sup>2</sup> reprinted by arrangement

<sup>1</sup> Henry C. Carey, b. 1793; d. 1879. *Principles of Political Economy*, 3 vols., 1837-40. *On International Copyright*, 1853; *Theory to Out-do England Without Fighting Her*, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> The proper succession of firm-titles was: Matthew Carey; Matthew Carey & Son; Carey, Lea & Carey; Carey, Lea & Blanchard; E. L. Carey & A. Hart; Carey & Hart; Lea & Blanchard; A. Hart; Henry C. Lea, etc.

Vide: *One Hundred Years of Publishing*, 1785-1885; Lea, Bros. & Co.; also, Smyth's *Philadelphia Magazines*, etc.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

with Constable & Co., the Waverley novels, which as soon as they left the binders' hands in Philadelphia, were dispatched by a specially chartered stage-coach, over hill and dale, for the supply of New York buyers.

Both Cooper and Irving also were among the authors who were "booked" by this famous Philadelphia house. Nor must we forget, while in the Quaker City, that zealous and capable journalist, Joseph R. Chandler, who gave to the *United States Gazette* its great repute; nor that other politician and financier, the handsome Nicholas Biddle, active in establishment of Girard College, and who for a time managed the *Portfolio* journal with the same quick decision which he put to the management of the United States Bank.

The *Recollections* of Samuel Breck,<sup>1</sup> who died over ninety, in 1862, are worth noting. He wrote very much in the easy, confidential spirit of Pepys, and of our friend Judge Sewall. As early as 1820 he laments the lack of good servants.

"Mrs. B—— discharged a servant-girl to-day for *fibbing* and mischief-making; . . . has been

<sup>1</sup>*Recollections*, etc., of Samuel Breck. Porter & Coates, Philadelphia, 1877.

## SAMUEL BRECK

nearly three years in my family. . . . No sooner was she entitled to receive a few dollars than she squandered them in finery . . . bedecking herself in merino shawls, chip bonnets, etc., without laying up fifteen dollars, tho' she had rec'd from one dollar and a half to one dollar and a quarter per week!" (p. 298).

And again, he philosophizes in this delightful fashion respecting the introduction of steam upon boats and railways:

"Steam in many respects interferes with the comfort of travelling—destroys every salutary distinction in society, and overturns by its whirl-a-gig power the once rational, gentlemanly, and safe mode of getting along on a journey. . . . Talk of *ladies* on board a steamboat or in a railroad car! There are none. . . . To restore herself to her caste, let a lady move in select company at five miles an hour, and take her meals in comfort at a good inn, where she may dine decently" (pp. 276-79).

### OTHER CITIES, INNS AND LIBRARIES

MR. BRECK, the old Philadelphia merchant, says, in his diary under date of 1829:

"There run between Philadelphia and New York, 44 coaches connected with steamboats com-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ing and going, carrying a daily average of 350 to 400 passengers!"

"Yet," he continues—"in going over the same route in August, 1789, I had the whole stage to myself." And our old friend Philip Hone, of the "Diary," writes, under date of 1828:

"We started [from Albany] at 10 o'clock, in an extra stage for Boston, by the way of Lebanon, Northampton, etc. We gave \$70 for the coach to convey the party of seven persons to Boston. [And again, at Northampton.] We visited, in the afternoon, the Round Hill School, and were politely entertained by Mr. Bancroft."

I shall make no apology for these *marginalia*, or what may seem isolated facts; they are not given by way of gossip or to engage flagging attention, but rather as so many bits of color which shall contribute—each its share—in making up and revivifying the atmosphere of the time, and in bringing into view, without the reader's cognizance, the ebb and flow of every-day life. Under such conditions the writers we have named, or shall name, were ripening for their work, or beginning it, or making its matured utterance. How it may be with

## MARGINALIA

others I cannot say, but with me the buzz of travel, the roll of the coach, the swinging of the inn sign; the stars that are shining in this or that theatre, the clanging knell for this or that hero, the jolly echo of this or that fête day breaking on the ear, do somehow bring back the time, and give a real and unforgettable setting to the men and women we talk of.

It was in 1836 that Mayor Hone sold that grand house of his opposite City Hall Park, thenceforward to become a part of the great hostelry made eminent by the mastership of the elder Cozzens; and the ex-mayor, in his diary, tells us of the price he received for it—\$60,000—and says, in querulous mood:

“What shall I do? Lots of good size within two miles of the City Hall are selling at from \$8,000 to \$10,000; and turkeys at \$1.50 each!”

Poor man; he ended with buying a lot for a new house “up town,” at Broadway and Great Jones Street.

One who walked in lower Broadway in those days might have seen, not far from the Park palings, a little gold eagle, with extended wings, that marked the entrance upon a jewelry establishment with the name of “Marquand” athwart its door—a name which has

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

since been endeared by association with beneficent gifts.

The old Society Library, representing one of the very first associated efforts to provide books for New Yorkers, was considering the erection of a new house for its treasures upon the "up-town" corner of Leonard Street and Broadway.

In Philadelphia the Franklin Institute (founded 1821) was thriving, while the Philosophical Society and Library Company were of much older establishment; so, too, was that venerable "Loganian" gift of books, which boasted the oldest material shelter ever given to a public library in America. Nor must we omit mention of the severe Doric front (highly admired in its day) of the ancient Redwood Library in Newport, calling up recollections of the Collinses, and of Ezra Stiles, and the Channings. While far in the South, the venerable Charleston Library had been founded long before the Revolution, and—burned or preyed upon through years of war—had held its own in some locality near to the site where it still survives in goodly age. There, in the first quarter of this century, many leisure-loving descendants of the Huguenots found their way to pore over the musty quartos, or perhaps to

## LIBRARIES

discuss the growing fortunes of that bright, up-country man, John C. Calhoun, or of that other clever Carolinian, Robert Y. Hayne (U. S. Senator 1826-32), who was fast ripening his faculties—legal and forensic—for those famous contests that were to ensue with Daniel Webster and others. Meantime Colonel William Allston (who had fought in Marion's Legion in Revolutionary days) used to drive down from his Waccamaw plantation with his four-in-hand team, through forests of the long-leaved pines, where flocks of wild turkeys lurked—sometimes straying athwart the high-road—and dashed with a tempest of outcries from young negroes of the household through the tall gates of the old Brewton homestead.

A far-cry it may be, perhaps, from the mention of a typical old-style planter—who, if his rice crop came in well, ordered luxurious hangings and Turkish rugs, from London, for his King Street house—to things of literary moment or relationship. And yet this fast-driving colonel and planter was the father of that Governor Joseph Allston (1812-14) who won and married the beautiful Theodosia Burr (only child of Aaron Burr and great-granddaughter of Jonathan Edwards), who on a fateful and fair morning of December, 1812, sailed away

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

from a Georgetown dock and was never heard of more.

### TWO GEORGIANS

OVER the border of the adjoining State, where, in Colonial days, the eloquent Whitefield had made his voice heard near to the cane-brakes, and where Macpherson, of Ossian fame, had pushed his bargains with the kindly and noble Oglethorpe, there lived an Irishman, Richard Henry Wilde—(born 1789), but an American in heartiness and by adoption—who had emigrated thither at the age of eight only, and whose father, a Dublin man, had lost his fortune in the time of the Irish rebellion and had come hither to mend the waste—not altogether with success; but his son did better. He was Attorney-General of the State in 1810, and in Congress from 1828 to 1835. Thereafter he went to Europe, passing five years there, largely in Italy, giving scholarly attention to Italian literature, which he greatly loved, and virtually discovering a portrait of Dante, by Giotto, which had long been lying *perdu* on the walls of the Bargello prison in Florence. In the same spirit, he pushed investigations about another lesser Italian poet, and the relations



## HENRY WILDE

of the latter with a certain Esté princess; all which resulted in his pleasant book on Tasso.<sup>1</sup>

As a still more rattling remembrance of this Georgia Congressman and scholar, I venture to cite this little spangle from some of his Moore-like verse, which in its day had great popularity:

“My life is like the summer rose  
That opens to the morning sky,  
But ere the shades of evening close  
Is scattered on the ground—to die!  
Yet on the rose’s humble bed  
The sweetest dews of night are shed,  
As if she wept, the waste to see—  
But none shall weep a tear for me!”

In 1844, this Irish-American poet and politician went to New Orleans, and died there in the plenitude of his powers, just as he was beginning to taste the rich savors of that city of the Creoles, and of its winter carnivals of sunshine.

Another Georgia name should be noted in passing, for the tinge of realism his sketches gave to Southern literary work. I allude to

<sup>1</sup>*Conjectures, etc., concerning Torquato Tasso*, 2 vols., 12mo, New York, 1842.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

Judge Longstreet,<sup>1</sup> who while holding judicial positions published (in journals first) a rare series of life-like and witty sketches of the Georgia characters he had encountered. In later life he became a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was successively President of the University of Mississippi and of South Carolina College. His book may still be found in libraries—public or private—which have not yet tabooed the realism that makes the tavern talk refulgent with flashes of negro humor and hazy with the smoke of tap-rooms.

### FROM WEST TO EAST

As for the great modern city of Chicago, in that decade where we stray loosely (sometimes remembering the 'teens of the century and sometimes overleaping into the thirties) it was little known to most people<sup>2</sup>—especially reading people—save as the site of Fort Dearborn, and of a small, scatterry, trading-post which

<sup>1</sup>Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, b. 1790; d. (in Mississippi) 1870. *Georgia Scenes and Characters* (originally in newspapers), published in New York, 1840.

<sup>2</sup> See *Long's Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River*, etc., 2 vols., Philadelphia, 1824. Note, especially, p. 164, vol. i.

## FROM WEST TO EAST

nestled under the wing of its protective stockade; while the flatlands, where now steel-tied temples (Masonic and other) scale the skies, showed only marshes oozy with flux and reflux of river and lake, where herons stalked and loons uttered their wailing cry. In those days, when the great Chicago could not count a dozen families in its population beyond the scant garrison of Fort Dearborn, John Quincy Adams was rallying his political forces for that campaign against General Jackson which landed the former in the Presidential chair (1825). He was nearly sixty at that day, and wore the polish due to residence in at least four European courts—if, indeed, any court polish can be predicated of that Sage of Braintree who had never foregone, with all the changes in his life, those simplicities which had grown in him at the old Adams home, with its high well-sweep (still religiously cared for and cherished) and under the influences of that good dame Abigail Adams,<sup>1</sup> at whose knee he had crouched, upon Penn Hill—on the day of the Battle of Bunker Hill—and watched, mother and son together, the ominous cloud of smoke which rose over burning Charlestown.

<sup>1</sup> *Diary of John Quincy Adams*, 12 vols., 8vo. Edited by C. F. Adams.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

Kirkland (John Thornton) was at the head of Harvard, carrying great dignity and suavity to that office, and much kindness toward younger workers—specially that indefatigable Jared Sparks, compiler of the works of Washington and Franklin, and who later (1849–53) was successor to Everett in the presidency of Harvard. Everett was then professor of Greek, keeping alive the eloquent traditions which had belonged to the brief epoch when Quincy Adams held the chair of rhetoric, while George Ticknor taught French, Spanish, and belles-lettres (1819–35). Dr. Andrews Norton<sup>1</sup> represented the milder poetic graces of the college, editing with approval an edition of Mrs. Hemans's poems (1826), and writing devotional verses of much popularity; yet keeping his doctoral pen well-sharpened for vigorous—if somewhat acrid—theologic thrusts at such come-outers and independent teachers as were shortly to confront his dignity in Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Parker.

### POET BANCROFT

AMONG those at Harvard, in the first quarter

<sup>1</sup>Andrews Norton, b. 1786; d. 1852. *A Statement of Reasoning for not Believing the Doctrines of Trinitarians, etc.*, published 1883.

## POET BANCROFT

of this century, whom the quick eye and ear of the scholarly Everett detected as youngsters of promise was a certain George Bancroft,<sup>1</sup> the clever son of a Worcester Congregational minister, who had studied closely and showed a wakeful ambition at Exeter Academy: graduating before he had completed his seventeenth year, he was not slow to accept the advices and moneys of those Harvard friends who counselled further study abroad. For two or three years thereafter he ranged through Central Europe, equipping himself as a linguist, and grappling, almost fiercely, with all opportunities that offered for either scholastic or social advancement.

A longish stay at Göttingen put him upon the friendliest of terms with Dr. Heeren, who was among the first to advise and illustrate the introduction of a politico-economic bone-work into the old, flaccid, and vascular masses of historic record. At Berlin, the young American had his taste of the Sunday evenings at the home of Schleiermacher; carrying thence for a time—perhaps for all time—a more pro-

<sup>1</sup> George Bancroft, b. 1800; d. 1891. Harvard, 1817; *Poems*, 1823; *History of the United States* (1st vol.), 1834; (2d vol.), 1837. Last revised edition (6 vols.), 1884-85.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

nounced pantheistic trail to his theologic thought than could have thriven under the droppings of the Worcester pulpit where his father expounded. He saw the Humboldts too; encountered Goethe at his own home—awed doubtless, but always bumptiously American; at Rome, he fore-gathered with Bunsen, sowing the seed there of a life-long friendship; upon an American war-vessel at Leghorn he is invited to meet Byron, and devises a swiftly following opportunity to call upon his Lordship at the Lanfranchi palace, where, by happy chance, the Countess Guiccioli steals in graciously upon their interviews. All these, and other such, made uncommon experiences for the son of a quiet New England parson. 'T is little wonder that pulpit engagements—to which he gave some attention, on his return in 1822—did not enthrall him; nor did a Greek tutorship at Harvard, for which he was booked, hold him in durance for more than a year. Poems were simmering in his thought, which found outcome (1823) in a thin volume dedicated to the "President of Harvard University, the author's early benefactor and friend;"<sup>1</sup> the author's own wanderings in Europe get a de-

<sup>1</sup>This was Dr. Kirkland, and the thin booklet came from the University Press of Hilliard & Metcalf. I

## BANCROFT AS POET

corous setting forth in the verse; nor is there a lack of Childe Harold flavors:—

“Build in thy soul thy Paradise;  
The world of thought is all thine own.”

And again:

“Farewell to Rome; how lovely in distress;  
How sweet her gloom; how proud her wilder-  
ness!

Farewell to all that won my youthful heart,  
And waked fond longings after fame. We  
part.

The weary pilgrim to his home returns;  
For Freedom's air, for Western climes he burns;  
Where dwell the brave, the generous and the  
free,

O! there is Rome; no other Rome for me!”

Yet Bancroft was not long enamoured of the muse, and the little volume was presently withdrawn from circulation. A copy in the

give a fragment from its opening poem of “Expectation:”—

“’T was in the season when the sun  
More darkly tinges spring's fair brow,  
And laughing fields had just begun  
The Summer's golden hues to show,  
Earth still with flowers was richly dight  
And the last rose in gardens glowed.  
In Heaven's blue tent the sun was bright  
And western winds with fragrance flowed.”

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

possession of the Lenox Library shows numerous interlineations and emendations in the script of the author—as if he had once intended a revised imprint; his engrossment, however, in those years with his friend Dr. Cogswell—with educational schemes, culminating in the establishment of the Round Hill School—gave other direction to his industries and ambitions.

### ROUND HILL SCHOOL

DR. COGSWELL<sup>1</sup> was an older man than Bancroft, but their common trails of European travel had brought them into lively mental contact; both had pursued studies of an omnivorous sort; the elder was familiar with the English school of Harrow, and Bancroft had glowing memories of a visit at Hofwyl; and out of their interfused experiences grew up the plan for a boys' school upon the banks of the Connecticut which should put the academies of Exeter and of Andover into the shade.

The site chosen was a charming one; Round Hill, with its century-old pines and chestnuts—

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Green Cogswell, b. 1786; d. 1871. *Life of Joseph G. Cogswell, as sketched in his Letters*: privately printed; Cambridge, 1874; edited by Anna Ticknor.



## NORTHAMPTON

many of their giant boles still braving the weathers—dominated the pretty river town of Northampton, where arching elms shaded the sleepy highways and where the venerable homesteads of the Dwights, and the Lymans, and the Strongs diffused an aroma of respectability. From the hill on which stood the early and later buildings of this school, one could look eastward athwart and over the embowered town to the heights of Mount Holyoke; somewhat more to the left, but still eastward and northward and beyond wide-reaching river meadows, was the gleam of Amherst houses and Amherst College; while southward, with the great ox-bow bendings in the Connecticut intervening, rose the rugged cliffs of Mount Tom. The school territory embraced fifty or more acres of field, forest, and gardens, while a near stream (the Licking) was impounded for the diversion of pupils in swimming or boating. A boy might have his garden if he would, or his carpenter-bench, if his tastes ran in that direction. There were native teachers, specially imported, of Italian, of French, of German, and an English master of deportment. Even the carving of a fowl and other arts and graces of the table were not neglected; and on Sundays the boys in lustrous toilettes filed

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

away in military ranks to the Unitarian or Episcopal churches, as their home-breeding demanded. On festival occasions in summer weather they piled into great open coaches, and drawn by huge Pennsylvania horses, they carried their noisy cheer up and down the banks of the Connecticut.<sup>1</sup>

No wonder it was a favorite school, and that boys far-away sniffed the odor of its steaming dinners, where fellow-lads did the carving; no wonder that they caught the lively rumors of those joyous coaching bouts, and of those great near woods—chestnuts among them—where red and gray squirrels chattered and where sometimes on the early snows even the wild turkey printed its tracks. From South Carolina came the Haynes, the Middletons, and the Rutledges; from Maryland, the Gilmores, Harpers, and Merediths; and from New York, the Edgars, the Newbolds, the De Witts, and Van Rensselaers. Sometimes the roll-call reached a hundred and fifty names.<sup>2</sup> But the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Henry W. Bellows (an old pupil) tells us that on one of these drives (1825) he caught his first sight of a steamboat—the Commodore McDonough—at Middletown. Thomas Appleton, too (*Old and New*, July, 1872), gives many pleasant reminiscences.

<sup>2</sup> In an old number of the *Christian Spectator* (January, 1828), I find a notice of the "New Haven Gymna-

## DR. COGSWELL

pace set was an exhaustive one; expenses were heavy; there was no endowment; and as years went by there grew up a partial lack of harmony between the two administrators. Mr. Cogswell had from the first represented the fatherly and the indulgent side of the management; while the younger and more ambitious Bancroft stood for the discipline, for master-ship, and for ceremony. After some seven or eight years the latter withdrew from the enterprise, worsted in purse and in hopes. A few years later bankruptcy befell the establishment, and only the imposing buildings and the yet more imposing forest trees in their rear kept alive the traditions of the golden noon-tides and of the crowded coaches which had made happy the boys of Round Hill.

## LIBRARIAN COGSWELL

BUT the career of the amiable and serene Dr. Cogswell did not end with the shadows which

sium," projected by Sereno E. and Henry Dwight (sons of President Timothy Dwight), "intended to resemble the Round Hill School, at Northampton, the proprietors of which, for having introduced the *Gymnasium* into this country . . . deserve the thanks of the friends of literature."

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

fell darkly upon the Northampton school. He was near to fifty, it is true, and misfortunes had been many; he had failed in his law purposes (though he had studied with Fisher Ames); failed, too, in his home life, by the quick, sad death of a beloved wife—leaving a wound never wholly healed; his health always precarious; directing a school of large repute at Raleigh, in North Carolina; invited to the presidency of another in Louisiana; editing the stately and (for a time) the lively old *New York Review*, and urged by Washington Irving to accompany him as *attaché* to the American Embassy in Spain. He could not do this, however, without interrupting his assiduous nursing of the Astor purposes toward the founding of a great public library; and it was very largely through his courteous and persistent urgency that those purposes took effect.

Thereafter, he burrowed in books; first in Bond Street, mousing there amongst dusty and cumulating piles which threatened to bury him with their toppling masses; later in Lafayette Place, the mania of books growing year by year and feeding his serenities as the piles lifted. He loved books—loved their title-pages, their dates, their colophons, their variety—loved them with an eager and grasping love.

## BANCROFT AS POLITICIAN

A good, kindly face he had, with a lurking shrewdness in it which made itself felt sharply—only in bargaining for a book. And whatever extended and happy influences may grow out of the zeal of those who guard the present great "United Libraries," New Yorkers should never be allowed to forget that the soundest and most fruitful labor in the development of the Astor Library was due to the care and love and sagacity of Dr. Joseph Cogswell.

## BANCROFT AS POLITICIAN AND HISTORIAN

NOR did Bancroft lose his staff of empire when the boys stampeded from Round Hill. He early showed a hankering after politics, and was trenchant and demonstrative in his democratic proclivities.

While yet planted in the mastership of a school, he had uttered and published (1826) a somewhat rampant oration on universal suffrage. But he had not at command the arts of popular oratory; his figure was not imposing; his voice, though strident and far-reaching, was without winningness in its tones; and he loved always forceful and scathing periods rather than beguiling ones. By 1838 he had,

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

however, so far ingratiated himself with those New Englanders who marched to the music of General Jackson as to receive the appointment (from Martin Van Buren) of Collector for the Port of Boston—an appointment that was historically signalized by the official presence of Nathaniel Hawthorne in the subordinate position of weigher and gauger. Meantime the earlier volumes of his history (vol. i. in 1835, vol. ii. in 1837) have come to issue and to loud, approving acclaim. Dr. Heeren voiced his plaudits across seas from Göttingen, and Everett, in the orderly pages of the *North American*, signified the favorable judgment of Harvard. There was, indeed, a disposition in critical quarters to condemn the bounce of his impetuous rhetoric. But this fault, if fault it were, abode with him from the beginning; he loved heroics; by natural bias he drifted away from simplicities; sonorous and balanced periods, especially those with an ooze of freedom in them, enchained him.

“What though thought is invisible and even when effective, seems as transient as the wind that raised the cloud? It is yet free and indestructible; can as little be bound in chains as the aspiring flame, and when once generated takes Eternity for its Guardian!” (Page 112, vol. i.)

## BANCROFT'S HISTORY

And again he says of the victories of that first Revolutionary battle of Lexington :

"Their names are held in grateful remembrance, and the expanding millions of their countrymen renew and multiply their praises from generation to generation."

He loved a good tail to his chapters—something to impress, and give emphasis; just as a coachman, proud of his conduct of a spirited team, loves to add *éclat* to his success by a good crack of his whip. Nor should we forget that 't is the warmth of his democratic spirit which makes him boil over into his most exuberant utterances; and if he catch a rhetorical fall, it is oftenest from an over-eager step in his march to the music of American freedom.

Of the larger and generally recognized qualities of Bancroft's history, of the wide and untiring research involved, of its painstaking, conscientious balancing of authorities, and of the earnest, unshrinking Americanism which warms it through and through, it is unnecessary to speak.

Mr. Bancroft was twice married; first in 1827—his wife surviving only a few years—and again, if I do not mistake, during his incumbency of the Federal office in Boston.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

Both marriages, as one of his biographers<sup>1</sup> says with a pleasant euphuism, contributed to his "happiness and to his sources of material comfort." Certain it is that the losses of Round Hill did not weigh permanently upon him, nor did he ever stand largely in need of revenue from professional work or from his books.

It was early in the forties that he left Boston and established his roof-tree in New York. For what cause a Harvard scholar and a Massachusetts man—both of whose wives had been accomplished and cultivated New Englanders, and who was himself still deeply enlisted in historic labors—should forego the literary opportunities of Cambridge for the surge and clatter of the Manhattan capital, made a puzzle for a good many inquisitive folk. It was a puzzle that it would be impertinent in us, writing so far after date, to attempt to solve. Yet it may be whispered *sub-rosa* that the Democratic bounce of an officeholder under Van Buren would hardly serve as

<sup>1</sup> No proper or extended biography of Bancroft has been published. I am indebted for most of the facts cited to Thomas Appleton (*Old and New*), Sloane, Austin, Scott, and Dr. Allibone, in his *Encyclopædia*, or his later notes in the *American Encyclopædia of Biography*.



## OFFICE-HOLDER AND DIPLOMAT

a very good flux for the interfusion of social elements in times when Edward Everett and John Davis<sup>1</sup> were Governors, and Beacon Street still bristling with its Quincy hauteurs and its old Federal affinities.

Howbeit, Bancroft's heart warmed toward the borough of Manhattan; and for many years thereafter, when not absent on official business, his home there was a centre of kindly hospitality.

## OFFICE-HOLDER AND DIPLOMAT

IN the year 1845, when the Whig interregnum of Harrison and Tyler had given place to President Polk, Bancroft was named Secretary of the Navy. It is doubtful if he could have piloted a wherry across the Hudson, but he was known as a shrewd man of affairs, and a worker; moreover, he had only a few years before closed his history of Colonization<sup>2</sup> with such eloquent generalities respecting the slave-trade and Africans as were not distasteful even to those who favored the annexation of Texas;

<sup>1</sup> In 1844 Bancroft had good support as Democratic nominee for Governor of Massachusetts, but was defeated by Governor Morton.

<sup>2</sup> Being vol. iii. of Bancroft's *History of the United States*, published in 1840.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

he had furthermore won America plaudits by his picturesque presentment of the kindly Oglethorpe guiding pious Moravians to a home upon the savannahs of Georgia, and of New Englanders assisting at the fall of Louisburg, and finally crowning his volume with that first glimpse (in his story of the United States) of the "Widow's Son, the Virginia Stripling," who was shortly to have in his keeping "the rights and destinies of countless millions."

Mr. Bancroft held place in the Polk Cabinet for only a year, but signalized his administration by his advocacy and effective establishment of the Naval Academy at Annapolis; and again, by such specific and urgent instructions to naval commanders on the Pacific as made them ready to pounce upon Monterey and San Francisco, so soon as war with Mexico was declared.<sup>1</sup> Having given such pronunciamiento to his patriotism, Bancroft left the Cabinet to replace Mr. Everett (his old teacher at Harvard) as Minister to Great Britain.

Thither he took his brusquerie, his alertness, his shrewd Americanism. But with all his democratic leanings and out-spokenness, he had

<sup>1</sup> Battle of Palo Alto was fought in May, 1846, and July 18th, same year, officers of the Portsmouth raised the Stars and Stripes in San Francisco. .

## BANCROFT AS DIPLOMAT

yet a ceremonious courtesy with which he loved to dignify his intercourse with any interlocutor—an old, inherited Puritan crust of stiffness that rarely left him, and which bestood him well under the ceremonials of his mission, whether at London (1846–49) or later (1867–74) in Berlin. With those who knew him intimately, this stiffness did not display itself, nor was it ever offensive; it seemed rather the instinctive and unconscious bristling of an old Puritanic virility which took on such expression as a Covenanter might have shown—not so much a combativeness as a readiness for combat, if need came; just as a placable dog of good breeding will set his hirsute signals astir along all his spine at sound of some strange step.

Let no one suppose that this took away from his courtesies, in which he was, on occasions, capable of outdoing the most punctilious of the Anglicans. There were witnesses of his manner who said he had a native proclivity to sonorous compliment, to courtly genuflexions, to wary yet unctuous caressment of established dignities, whether of State or Church; all the more remarkable in one who cherished beneath it the rank growth of an assertive and bump-tious democracy.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

His diplomatic duties did not forbid attention to his historic studies, and the accumulation of a great mass of material, which—engrossed in portly folios—now enriches the Lenox collection. The first volume of his history of the Revolution<sup>1</sup> appeared in 1850, and the others followed at uneven distances of time until the final volume (x.) appeared in the year (1874) on which date terminated his embassy to the court of the German Emperor, William I.

During all these twenty-five years (which would have made a great gap in most lives, but which counted for far less with this veteran, who took smilingly the seventies and eighties that lighted his long career) he toiled at his history, rode jauntily in Rotten Row, made a home in Washington, and another, long cherished and loved, upon the cliffs at Newport—where he had a lawn rivalling English lawns—and set his roses to bloom in fairer colors and with more velvety petals than any that opened under the fogs of Twickenham or of Richmond Hill. He loved a beautiful rose as he loved a sure-footed horse, or a rotund trail to his historic periods.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. v. of the United States History, whose concluding volume, x., did not appear until 1874.

## GEORGE P. MARSH

His long life has held us to longer comment than is our wont; and even now, as one of his high, rhetorical periods slips from tongue and memory, we seem to see that alert figure and good horseman, mounted in soldierly way—trim, erect, and with lifted head, snuffing the breezy air of a November morning, upon the banks of the Potomac or by Georgetown Heights—on his well-groomed horse, with a rose at the lapel of his coat, his eyes keen, his hair frosted with eighty years—riding primly and gallantly away, into that Past which is swallowing us all.

## GEORGE P. MARSH

THE man we have to speak of now was not less learned and scholarly, but never filled so large a space in the public eye. Physically, he represented a more stalwart bit of New England manhood than Bancroft; his birth and bringing up were in the town of Woodstock, in Vermont, upon a shelf of hills lifting from those rolling lands which skirt the wooded range of a local Mount Tom, and which are laved round and about by the flow—gentle in summer and boisterous in flood-time—of a small affluent of the near Connecticut River.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

His father was a large land-owner, magistrate, and sturdy Puritan. The Puritan sturdiness the son inherited, with many yeoman-like qualities, and quite unusual bookish aptitudes. As a boy he regaled himself with stolen readings of an early Encyclopædia Britannica; nor did he at any age or under any circumstances outgrow an insatiate greed for "knowing things." He had never any patience with dabblers or with those who "half-knew" things. This touch of portraiture will, I am sure, be recognized by anyone who ever encountered the stalwart presence and the questioning attitude which always belonged to George P. Marsh,<sup>1</sup> who represented our country, first at Constantinople, and afterward for many years, at the court of the King of Italy.

Hiram Powers, the well-known sculptor, was a school-fellow of his, and Rufus Choate, a college-mate at Dartmouth; and in both school and college years his art-love and his lingual instincts had so developed that, at the

<sup>1</sup> George P. Marsh, b. 1801; d. (at Vallombrosa, Italy) 1882. Best known in literary ways by his *Lectures on the English Language* (1861), *Origin and History of the English Language* (1862), *Man and Nature* (1864), and by various addresses. *Life and Letters* (edited by Mrs. Marsh, 1888) has unfortunately never been completed.

## EARLY YEARS OF MARSH

date of his graduation (1819), he was master of four or five languages—reading Homer as he read English—and had already furtively undertaken that hunt for rare etchings and engravings which in a few years thereafter made his collection<sup>1</sup> one of the most notable and valuable in America.

But this mention does by no means fix the limitation to the quests and studies of this stalwart, inquisitive Vermonter: before he had reached the age of thirty he had reported to the legislature, by special appointment, on the best methods of educating the deaf and dumb; had corresponded with Professor Rahn (of Copenhagen) on Scandinavian linguistics; and shortly thereafter establishing himself as an attorney in Burlington, on the beautiful shores of Lake Champlain, had entered into large schemes of wool-growing and of manufacturing; had printed an Icelandic grammar, and had addressed the students of Middlebury College in such praise of the Goths, as exceeded as much as it antedated the later encomiums of the Teuton by Professor Freeman. "It was

<sup>1</sup> A remnant of this collection is still in possession of the Smithsonian Institution—many of its etchings, by Dürer, Rembrandt, and others, being of exceptional value.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

the spirit of the Goth," he says, "that guided the Mayflower, and the blood of the Goth that flowed at Bunker Hill." Meantime he is deeply interested in music—at one time meditating an elaborate work upon that subject—and again making such a homely and wise address upon the mechanic arts as prompts the mechanics and other voters of his region to nominate and elect him to Congress (1842-49). It was a cosey, modest home he held there (Washington), in the western part of the city, for many a winter; and thither came at odd times Robert Winthrop, Speaker, to talk of Texas and Houston; or Rufus Choate, to chat of old days at Dartmouth, and of Eschines and the marvellous music of Greek vocables; or Lieutenant Maury, to expatiate on the sweep of ocean currents; or Healy, to tell his stories of contacts with royalty; or Daniel Seymour, to discourse in honeyed, swift-flowing phrases about Hegel and Kant—all this at an always modest table, over which the New England graces of a most accomplished mistress presided; and always the stout master flanked by a modest Bocksbeutel, expressing his old Teuton love for the modest juices of the Stein-wein.

From this Washington home he was called away, not unwillingly, upon the election of



## GEORGE P. MARSH

General Taylor to the Presidency (1849), to duties and delights of another sort upon the banks of the Bosphorus. Of these newer but always brilliant scenes, there are charming descriptions by Mrs. Marsh;<sup>1</sup> and other descriptions, by her husband—of Egypt and its Nile banks and wonders, of Akhaban and its picturesque cliffs, of the camel voyagings athwart the Sinai desert, and of other outlying regions, subject to the Oriental monarch to whom the American Minister was accredited, and in respect to which it became his pleasant duty to report. Special diplomatic offices also gave him ambassadorial privileges on a visit to Athens, whence he journeyed through Roumania and Styria, with the opportunity of putting his keen eyes and his inquisitorial mind upon the wonders of the cave of Adelsburg. All this made rich forage-ground for the man of so many languages, and so sharp and thorough in his quest for the proper solution of the riddles of nature.

### HOME AND SECOND EMBASSY

WE may be sure that it was with reluctance

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Letters of George P. Marsh*, vol. i., pp. 152-3-4-6.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

that he turned his back upon the splendors of the Orient, when Russia had opened the Turkish war by her first cruel guns at Sinôpe, and Pierce had succeeded to Fillmore in the Washington arena.

But conditions were altered in America; the ugly thrust and parry between slavery advocates and those who abhorred it, had become more vengeful, and was ripening toward that stage which culminated in the Civil War; his moneyed interests, whether in lands, wool-growing, or manufacturing, were suffering grievously; there was quick need for somewhat which should bring revenue. Hence came those lectures for Harvard and Columbia resulting in his scholarly books upon early English literature and language; scholarly and interesting, but lacking the careful synthesis which is apt to be lacking in works written swiftly, out of whatever fulness of knowledge, for a special and pressing occasion. He himself was never quite satisfied with these "chips" hewed away from the tree of his knowledge.

In *Man and Nature*, there was enough of wise observation, sound reasoning, and cumulated knowledge for a half-dozen treatises; but there was also that unstudied assemblage of parts which did not invite the lazy companion-

ship and easy perusal of the average book-reader. In 1857 he was made Railroad Commissioner for the State of Vermont, and treated its duties in such way—he says—as to bring a “hornet’s nest about his ears.”<sup>1</sup> All this, however, did never fully engross him or stay his omnivorous tastes and always widening outlook.

What wonder if he looked longingly across seas to the Ægean, and to Umbrian skies and memories, where he had found the ripening of his book-loves with golden harvests of art; and where the mellifluous echoes of Southern singers had lent their penetrative arias to the thun-

<sup>1</sup> In his *Earth as Modified by Human Action*, an extended edition of *Man and Nature*, he makes very frank declaration of his attitude with respect to corporations (p. 53, note). He says: “It is hard to ‘get the floor’ in the world’s great debating society; so when a speaker who has anything to say once finds access to the public ear, he must make the most of his opportunity. . . . I shall harm no honest man by endeavoring, as I have often done elsewhere, to excite the attention of thinking and conscientious men to the dangers which threaten the great moral and even political interests of Christendom, from the unscrupulousness of the private associations that now control the monetary affairs, and regulate the transit of persons, property, etc., etc.,” and other such matter of a sort that would have delighted Henry George! Commissioners of that stamp are hardly permissible now.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

derous concert of his loved Teuton bards? Though not a political worker in the ordinary sense, he had wrought in his way for Republican success in the contest of 1860; and scores of friends of both parties joined in furthering his views respecting new diplomatic service (the railroad people joining—it was hinted—in the urgency, through fear of another railroad “Report”), and within a month after Lincoln’s inauguration he was named Minister to the court of Italy. As he had left the Bosphorus when the first guns of the Russo-Turkish War were booming, so, now, he left America on his second period of foreign service while the echoes of the bombardment of Fort Sumter were still reverberating along our coasts and across the prairies of the West. In Italy he found, thenceforward, twenty-one years of distinguished and dignified service; following the court in its successive migrations from Turin to Florence, and from Florence to Rome. His heart and all his mind were in the service; the hills, the fir forests, the meadows of Clitumnus, Soracte, and the Campagna were all brotherly to him.

“I have such a passion,” he says (in a letter of June, 1865, to the present writer), “for the *nature* of Italy, that I do not see how I can ever

## GEORGE P. MARSH

live under another sky. . . . Why did not Providence give us Alps and a good climate?"

True, he had never visited Colorado, or the region of the Lookout Mountain: But withal, there is no let-up in his bold and aggressive Americanism:

"Our recent history," he writes in language (not gauged for the public eye) that should make us pardon De Lome for his private expression of likes and dislikes, "is striking a terrible blow at Europe; and I trust I may live to see the playing at foot-ball with coronets and mitres, crowns and tiaras, which the triumph of Democracy on *our* side will ere long occasion on *this*."

Unfortunately we can say little of that long period of diplomatic service; he wrote nothing that has been published; yet what a help to history would lie in the diary of such an observer, noting the progress in the crystallization of the popular and political forces of the Peninsula into a new Italian kingdom!

We know that his appetite for the beautiful, whether in art or nature, never abated; we know that an old Cromwellian Puritanism in him always growled (though under breath) at any invasion upon popular rights; we know

On recent history -  
most recent, I mean - is striking  
a terrible blow at Europe, and  
~~that~~ I mean live. To see the  
playing at football with coo.  
nets and victors crowns &  
tiaras, which the triumph of  
democracy on our side will  
be long, occasion on this.

## GEORGE P. MARSH

that tiaras and mitres always had a pasteboard look to him; we know that courtesy and friendliness and *bonhomie* always touched him, whether in kings or paupers; we know that he greatly loved to inoculate all open-minded, cultivated American travellers with his own abounding love for Italian art and Italian hopes; we know that the water-flashes of Tivoli or Terni, or all the blues by Capri, never wiped from his memory the summer murmurs of the Queechee at Woodstock, or the play of the steely surface of Champlain, under its backing of Adirondack Mountains.

He died in 1882 at Vallombrosa, a little conventional hamlet upon a fringe of wooded hills—rich in pines and firs—which skirt the Apennines east of Florence; it is a place beautiful in itself, with its shadows of valleys and flashes of the foamy Vicano; and it has a still larger warrant for embalmment in all wide-ranging imaginations by that mention of it in one of Milton's golden lines:

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa."

## CHAPTER II

OUR story of a diplomat and historian who loved discipline and ceremony and roses, reached over a great array of years, and it seems only yesterday (1891) that his prim, school-masterly figure went down under the horizon: while our good friend, the scholarly Marsh, with as quick an ear for musical notes as for the rugged rhythm of a Scandinavian folk-song—had made a goodly march into the depths of the present century before he joined the army of the dead at Vallombrosa.

There were lesser men of whom we spoke; men known for the virtues which distil in poems, and for other virtues which make other markings upon the sands of time. We tried to frame these several and briefer notices in such setting of historic or of social data as should give their subjects unforgettable pose and place in our little gallery.

To-day our eye is fastened on the New



## HORACE BUSHNELL

England pulpit, and on the presence there (at the epoch we are upon) of that spiritual man of rare gifts who wrote *Work and Play* and *Nature and the Supernatural*.

## HORACE BUSHNELL

I HAVE called him<sup>1</sup> a man of rare gifts, not yet, as it seems to me, appreciated at their true worth by those who are our conventional measurers of reputation.

He was born in a little village near Bantam Lake (in a house long since gone), not far away from Litchfield-Hill; but from this home the family removed, when the child was scarce three years old, to a larger farm in New Preston, upon the borders of a stream that flows from Lake Waramaug, and that once gave a busy "hum" to the wheels of his father's fulling-mill. There, came about a home-spun

<sup>1</sup> Horace Bushnell, b. 1802; d. 1876; was graduated, Yale College, 1827; *Christian Nurture*, 1847; *God in Christ*, 1849; *Sermons for the New Life*, 1858; *Moral Uses of Dark Things*, 1868; *His Life and Letters* [by his daughter]. Mary R. Cheney, 1880. The original *Allibone Dictionary* gives both date and place of birth wrongly. The *Supplement* gives true birth-date, but wrong place of birth.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

rearing of the lad—under the influence of a landscape which abounded in picturesque beauties, and the further influences of a delicate, indefatigable, spiritually minded mother whose “gray-blue eyes” beamed always on him tenderly, whether in love or in rebuke. Memories of that home and of those surroundings make up very much of the warp and woof of his admirable essay upon the “Age of Home-spun.”<sup>1</sup> For the most part there was only country schooling, with the “spring” given to it by a watchful and ambitious parent; while wiser economies under the same keen oversight gave a launch upon college life at Yale.

He studied there as such eager, inquiring minds must, but not always in the exact lines laid down by the directory; not indeed always giving full allegiance, but sharing, on one occasion at least, in a quasi-rebellion—believing that the governors by some decision of theirs had wronged him, and others. And believing thus, it belonged to his Puritan blood and breeding to call a halt and to declare for Justice. This perturbation, however, worked itself free—as over-shaken beer relieves itself by frothy output—and honors

<sup>1</sup> Read at Centennial Festival, Litchfield, 1851.

## HORACE BUSHNELL

and high consideration were won in those college years.

After this came a bout of school-keeping, in which he was not altogether himself; his wakeful mind taking quick cognizance of those who were earnest and had germs of growth in their brains; and correspondingly neglectful, nay scornful, perhaps, of those who could live on husks. Kindly patience with dulness or stupidity was, I think, never one of his virtues; his pages shine, up and down, with provocatives to thought; but nowhere in them do I find seductive twaddle, whereby sluggish minds can batten their lazy habit.

That monitress of the "gray-blue" eyes, who had hoped to feast her sight upon him in the pulpit, may have had her doubts; for he was restive in religious matters in those years, "expecting," as he says later, "so intently, to dig out a religion by my head that I was pushing it all the while practically away"—(p. 32, *Life*).

Yet it results as the trustful and praying mother had wished; and at the age of thirty or thereabout—he being lithe and strong and having taken a novitiate of tutorship at his college—he begins preachment as pastor in the city of Hartford—a city where we found

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

Trumbull and the others; and a city which he was to honor and to make honored not only by pulpit discourses of high Christian and crystalline qualities, but by contributing through his urgency and taste to the outpour and the planting of rich graces of landscape upon the very heart of the town.

### A VITAL PREACHER

It was not all plain sailing in that day in Connecticut pulpits for ambitious young clergymen who were battling thoughtfully with theologic problems, and putting out their own tentacles of feeling into the realm of Faith.

Beecherism and Taylorism and Tylerism—and I know not what besides—had their exponents, with such good, honest blunderbusses of Orthodoxy as Dr. Hawes to fire away, scattering, but with heavy slugs, at whatsoever new light shone too effusively above the old pulpit cushions.

Bushnell himself tells somewhere of his early experiences before yet planted in his new parish, and how he was toled away from the house of one good deacon to that of another,

## HORACE BUSHNELL

from fear that he might be impregnated with too many pungencies of the "New School." But our hero of the Litchfield hills was not easily impregnated; he had vital ways of thinking for himself. This brought clamorous experiences to him and heavy poundings from associations and consociations; under all which he carries himself with such serenities that even the arch-flagellants, when brought into open contact, express private wonderment that Beelzebub should ever lurk under such spirituality of mien.

He loved good and true things, whether of doctrine or conduct, wherever he met them; not a thorough-bred theologian, nor without strong dislike for that way of branding a man; struggling for language which should so measure his faiths and that of others as to bind all together; loving even certain Unitarian preachers in a way that made Drs. T —— and B ——, those good haters of creeds which were not theirs, shudder; but throughout his neighborly affiliation with the Boston brethren, objecting (as in his delightful letters to his friend Bartol) that he must keep his "Christ as man, and Christ as God—for the first quality to bring him near, and for the last, to give him power." It was a beautiful intellectual project of his,

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

to clothe the old technicalities and dogmas and orthodoxies in such new wedding-garments of shining language as should make them matchable with a faith born of later and larger thinkings. How he scorned cant; yet how he yearned toward the truths which had been misclad in it for so many years of 'durance!

His old college-folk of Yale, though proud, were, I think, a little shy of him, and of his broad range; 't is doubtful if he could have subscribed to every averment of *Day on the Will*, or to all the inclusions of Taylor's *Moral Government*. I doubt if he could ever have won installation as religious teacher there; yet he was sometimes invited to illuminate the college pulpit of a Sunday; and I can recall vividly his coming, and his prayer, and his talk upon some such occasion in the old college chapel. A spare man—as I remember him—of fair height, thin-faced, with no shadow of grossness in him—almost the hollow cheeks of an anchorite, and with a voice that bore one into celestial altitudes.

We upon the oaken benches were not great lovers of sermons in those days, or of preachers; but here was a man whose voice and manner held us; the old hymns caught a fresh

## BUSHNELL'S PREACHING

meaning, and were lighted with a new refulgence. The prayers, too, had in them something fresh, piercing; perhaps his own parish grew used to their vital, if deliberate, earnestness and pleading; perhaps they took on from his own desk (after weeks on weeks) that dreary conventionalism which spoils so much of extemporaneous praying; but to one hearing them rarely, this seemed quite impossible. His picturesque language, sharpened by subtle meanings, was like an ever-fresh and intense wrestling with the spirits of Evil for a standpoint in the Divine Presence—a logical and earnest building-up of an always new and always easier road to Heaven, whereby, as on Jacob's ladder of old, angels might, and did, come and go, with healing in their wings.

Then, in the sermons, there was pith; he stuck to the core of things. He was outside and remote from conventionalities—so remote that you would hardly expect him to say a "good-morning" as other men did, but to put casual greeting into such fashion as would strike deeper and last longer; a seer, looking into the depths that hem us in, with uttered warnings, advices, expostulations, tender encouragements, all wrapped in words that tingled with new meanings or beguiled one with

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

their resonant euphuisms. There be preachers who tow burdened sinners with tug and strain into smoother, calmer water, where riding is easy and skies alluring; but this man, somehow, without makeshift of theologic hawsers, took one under spiritual breezes, on great billows of reverential thought, into the harbor of divine serenities where a supreme presence reigned.

I am puzzled in the search for some excerpts which may show the tracks of this man, whether as disputant or sermonizer. In the very front of his defence against charges of heresy, he says:

“It were pleasant enough to be accounted orthodox by my brethren, if by that means I may have their confidence; but I think God will assist me, for the few years that remain, to suffer any judgment they are pleased to hold, if only I can find and maintain the truth. [And, again, from the same *Christ in Theology*:] “Nothing can be more clear, at this moment, than that . . . the reign of dogma, and state power, and ceremony, and priestly orders—everything that has held the organizing power [of the Church] in past ages, is now breaking down into impotence and passing away. And what shall we see in this but a preparation for the reign of the spirit . . . which,



## HORACE BUSHNELL

if it come into this valley of bones lying apart, and breathes into them, as the Life itself of God, will they not come together and live?"

Again, from an occasional article of much later date, "*Our Gospel a Gift to the Imagination*":

"Nothing makes infidels more surely than the spinning, splitting, nerveless refinements of theology. This endeavor to get the truths of religion away from the imagination, into propositions of the speculative understanding, makes a most dreary and sad history. . . . They were plants alive and in flower, but now the flavors are gone, the juices are dried, and the skeleton parts packed away and clarified in the dry herbarium called theology."

And, in the same connection, is a warm and gracious eulogy of Bunyan—no dogmatist he! but one who kindles the "world's imagination more and more":

"His Pilgrim holds on his way still fresh and strong as ever, nay, fresher and stronger than ever, never to be put off the road till the last traveller heavenward is conducted in."

He never gave up the consciousness of a grand unshrinkable *supernaturalism* compass-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ing us all from the beginning to the end. Under the shadow, or the beams of it (oftenest the latter), he walked with an awed step all his life long—whether up the central aisle of North Church, Hartford, or in the blaze of his bountiful June roses.

### THE MAN AND THE ARTIST

BUT there was much of interest in the man Horace Bushnell, apart from his pulpit exaltation; there was infinite tenderness in him; gleams of it show in the familiar letters which color the charming biography which his daughter has written; knowledge of it is, moreover, forced upon us by the hearty tone of the tributes to him from his friends and companions. But with all the tenderness in him, there was mingled a sturdy manliness which demanded independent ways of thought and action; he was never in any straits of politics, or of theologies, another man's man; one could not score him down for a vote or a petition, except his heart and judgment went with it; and when the "Association-West" of Fairfield or of other parts whacked at him with their bludgeons of disapproval, he was "on guard" with his fine ra-

## HORACE BUSHNELL

pier of argument, and did not always offer the "other cheek" to be smitten.

While outspoken in his views on public questions, he was not constituted for a good working politician. He could n't combine with impure elements, whether for backing a bad man for office or in shouldering up a good job for the print-folk of the party. He was not only, always and everywhere, intolerant of bare-faced dishonesty but equally so of that other insidious dishonesty which creeps in the stockings of statutes to its quarry.

But this fine-fibred man has not only his battles with Consociations and Associations—who would prune and adjust or pluck away his theologic plumage—he has also his battles with the New England climate and the winds that blow in March through the Connecticut Valley. Once strongly compacted, his studious habits have given growth to weakness of lungs and of throat, which compel rest and travel. Southern States, Europe, and California all give their spoils to his discerning eyes and his private letters (in the pleasant Biography).

His vocabulary, full and rich, gives him pigments of the rarest. Language indeed is a passion with him; and he sways its rhythmic treasures to his purpose. Music, too, impresses

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

him in his moments of exaltation, as a Divine Art:

"Oh, if I had the voice and art of Alboni or Jenny Lind" [he exclaimed, in a letter to a daughter (p. 270, *Life*)], "it really seems to me that I could make a new gospel of it in men's bosoms, out-preaching all preachers, and swaying the multitudes to good."

There are notable things in the *Dissertation on Language* by which, on a memorable occasion, he paved the way to his theologic defences:

"All words," he says, "are in fact only incarnations or *insensings* of thought." [And, again] "There is no book in the world that contains so many repugnances or antagonistic forms of assertion as the Bible. Therefore, if any man please to play off his constrictive logic upon it, he can show it up as the absurdest book in the world. But whosoever wants, on the other hand, really to behold and receive all truth, and would have the truth-world overhang him as an empyrean of stars, complex, multitudinous, striving antagonistically, yet comprehended, height above height and deep under deep, in a boundless score of harmony; what man soever . . . reaches with true hunger after this, and will offer himself to the many-sided forms of Scripture with a per-

## HORACE BUSHNELL

fectly ingenuous and receptive spirit—he shall find his nature flooded with senses, vastnesses, and powers of truth such as it is greatness to feel.”

But independent of the ingenuity of his *Language* talk—as a skirmishing foil to ward off theologic objurgations—there is great interest and philosophic truth, in his view of language, and of its dependence upon the current of intellectual advances—whithersoever intellectual struggles may tend—keeping pace with them and taking fulness from them. Also most significant and truthful is his allegation that obscure language—that is, language heavily weighted with exploratory processes of thought and struggles into the domain of the unknown—is not damnable *per se*. What goes after roots of things which grow out of the illimitable and unexplored, must be obscure; what is tentative, must be different from the familiar; what seeks to fathom new seas, must be longer than what measures the known depths.

It is a wonderfully fine figure, where he represents the commonplace, *clear* writer, as setting his head off in clean silhouette above a well-known horizon line, whereas the explorer (*i.e.*, the man who would widen range of

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

thought) carries his head against dim, mystic cloudland, by reason of which he may show vague, shadowy traits; but there are gleams of light, coming from beyond—in those shadowy traits—full of beckoning and warning for those who are themselves eager to explore.

Again, in more practical mood, he says:

“Never take a model to be copied. . . . Never try to create a fine style. . . . But if you can have great thoughts, let *these burst the shell of words*, if they must, to get expression. And if they are less rhythmic when expressed than is quite satisfactory, mere thought, mere head-work will, of course, have its triangulations, or ought to have. Add now great inspirations, great movings of sentiment, and these, just as long as the gale lasts, will set everything gliding and flowing—whether to order or not. But let no one think to be gliding always. A good prose motion has thumping in it.”

But it is not alone in language that this godly man is an adept. At some point in that turbulent stream which flows out from Lake Waramaug, he built in his younger days, a dam for his father's fulling-mill; and I have never a doubt that he matched and mated the stones of which that dam is built with a zeal

## BUSHNELL'S ART-LOVE

and aptitude that should make it worth looking after by the curious even now; and so all through life, whenever he had words or stones or flowers or trees to put together, he did it with an artist's instinct.

He never touches Road-side in his discourses about New England but he trails after him the fires of autumn foliage and the glow of summer flowers. He never tires of preaching Beauty and its humanizing and civilizing influence for country-folk. He loved trees, great and small, and Nature's own verdant cloaking of the waste places. Country roads, as he conceived of them, should carry hymns and sermons and hallelujahs in their cedars and draping vines. One might believe that it would make him lie uneasily in his grave if he knew of the vandalism of the telegraph people, and the yet greater vandalism of legislators who decree the extirpation of skirting coppices of vines and plants from our road-sides. With what a yearning of the heart he would have seen this despoilment of the old and charming ruralities of our country towns! This yearning for the bounties and the blessed things of Nature was what equipped him and encouraged him for that exploitation of the waste places in his home city of Hartford, which by

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

dint of his assiduities and taste—and their full appreciation by the authorities—gave that Connecticut city the charming little park which carries its green welcome to the eye of every passing traveller, and perpetuates, in the happiest and tenderest way, the memory of Horace Bushnell. There has been question of his statue thereabout, but his presence is richer than any statue, and is all over the place.

### A MAN OF OTHER METTLE

ON the third floor of old North College, which carries homely and honest reminders of student life at Yale seventy years ago—there roomed in Bushnell's time (1827), and over against him, in the northwest corner, a classmate three years his junior, who contrasted strongly with the dark-haired, independent, sturdy, perhaps somewhat awkward, man who hailed from Litchfield County, and whose career and character are sketched in these last pages.

The other student had engaging ways; he had blue eyes and flaxen hair and a *degagé* manner, which showed other associations than those with farmers by Lake Waramaug. He had written poems, too, even before his advent



to college, which had been published in his father's paper, the *Boston Recorder*, and thence had run, by reason of the picturesque qualities that shone in them, through half the prominent journals of the country. His *Absalom*, a tender interpretation of the Scriptural story in mellifluous blank verse, had been written in his freshman year, and showed a grace and an unction that took it into all the boudoirs of the town. Such pleasant employment doubtless interfered with the regular curriculum of study, nor does it appear that he ever had large ambitions in that direction; a strong inclination for social life and its festive regalements—toward which his poems opened a flowery path—early declared itself in him and never had abatement. His diary makes note:<sup>1</sup> of a collection he had made of French slippers, from "the prettiest feet in the world (known to me)." Such things do not prepare us for anything like engrossment in *Freedom of the Will*.

It is N. P. Willis<sup>2</sup> of whom we are speaking, a Maine man by birth, but passing his latter boyhood in Boston, from which centre of

<sup>1</sup> *Beers's Life*, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Nathaniel P. Willis; b. 1807; d. 1867. *Scripture Sketches*, 1827; *Pencillings by the Way*, 1835-36; *Letters from Under a Bridge*, 1840; *Life* (by Professor Beers), 1885.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

heretical doctrine (as Connecticut clergymen counted it) his father—who was rigidly orthodox—sent him away for a collegiate career under the benign Calvinism of Yale. We cited a bit of color from his early diary; there is further pleasant mention of his going on his winter vacation (1827) to New York, with college friends, and attending a brilliant ball at the home of the Mayor. On a Saturday, again, he goes to a fête at Dr. Hosack's; on New Year's Day he calls on *everybody*, in company with William Woolsey; dines at George Richards's<sup>1</sup> (in St. John's Park),

“had seat next the beautiful Miss Adelaide, and enjoyed it much. They live in the French style, and the last course was sugar-plums.”

There were a great many sugar-plums in his early career; and some readers have thought that his biographer may have given undue measure to the exhibit of such *bon-bons*; yet the story of his life is most entertaining, is fair, judicial, as full as material warranted—though hardly sympathetic enough to gratify the warm lovers of this master of galloping prose. Few men could have written sympathetically of Willis. Much of his work was brilliant persi-

<sup>1</sup> *Beers's Life*, pp. 56, 57.

## WILLIS AS POET

flage; it shrunk under critical touch. Nor was it easy to sketch knowingly this poet's contacts with social life, and his ambitions and triumphs there, and at the same time weigh understandingly his higher tastes and accomplishments. Those accomplishments were indeed very real, though of a special quality. It might almost be said that his accomplishments undid him. In his latter years—for the behest of admiring readers—he was over-fond of always putting his thought (or rather his observations and suggestions) into a finical millinery of language; charging and fatiguing himself, to avoid plainness of speech—as much as ever an accredited modiste (who has studied colors all her life) wearies and worries herself to kill simplicities by the aggregation of her tints and furbelows.

Willis won his first triumphs as a poet in his younger years; nor can I forbear putting on record this little fragment, showing very much of beauty and grace:

“On the cross-beam under the old South bell  
The nest of a pigeon is builded well.  
In summer and winter that bird is there,  
Out and in, with the morning air:  
I love to see him track the street,  
With his wary eye and active feet;

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

And I often watch him as he springs,  
Circling the steeple with easy wings,  
'Till across the dial his shade has passed  
And the belfry edge is gained at last.  
'T is a bird I love with its brooding note,  
And the trembling throb in its mottled throat.  
Whatever tale in the bell is heard  
He broods on his folded feet unstirred,  
Or rising half in his rounded nest,  
He takes the time to smooth his breast,  
Then drops again with filmed eyes,  
And sleeps as the last vibration dies.  
I would that in such wings of gold  
I could my weary heart unfold;  
And while the world throngs on beneath,  
Smooth down my cares and calmly breathe;  
And only sad with others' sadness,  
And only glad with others' gladness.  
Listen, unstirred, to knell or chime,  
And, lapt in quiet, bide my time,"

## JOURNALIST AND MAN OF THE WORLD

AFTER graduating at Yale (1827), Willis did some literary work in Boston; at first as would seem at the instigation of Peter Parley, who had piloted so many young people over London Bridge and into regions remote, in showy Annuals, Tokens, or Souvenirs. Willis also es-

## EARLY WRITINGS OF WILLIS

tablished the *American Monthly*, wherein his falchion of a pen made its first slashes at those socio-romantic problems which he loved. In the *Annals* we find him in leash with a certain Nathaniel Hawthorne, whom (D. V.) we shall again encounter; such names, too, as Rufus Dawes, Grenville Mellen, James Percival, and that of our old friend Mrs. Sigourney, bob up and down upon the pages which set forth the literary delights then in store. There was occasional writing by Willis for the old *Boston Recorder*—not yet so stiff with age, as with its moral tenets; and possibly, also, for that *Youth's Companion*, the lively babe of the *Recorder* office (1827), since given up to a palatial maturity which delights myriads of young folk who never knew the kind rigidities of the *Recorder*.

But neither tokens nor keepsakes, brim as they might with lush verse and luscious engravings, nor yet his *American Monthly*, did graft the ornamental graces of this poet securely and growingly upon the Boston stock of thought. The magazine failed for lack of support; and there was a wary, questioning look from under critical Cambridge brows at the dancing and easy measures of this Yale Hyacinth; even the old Park Church, remarkably

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

free from Unitarian proclivities, was inclined to discipline the young poet of *Absalom* and *Hagar*, who could not forego his liking for a good theatrical cast.

All this ends in a divorce from Boston; the moribund "Monthly," with a trail of Eastern debts, was joined with the New York *Mirror*, under the shrewd directory of George P. Morris<sup>1</sup> who was eminently practical, both as printer and as song-writer. Willis never made a truer friend, or one who kept by him more honestly and unflinchingly. Another associate in this enterprise was Theodore Fay, subsequently well known by several spirited novels<sup>2</sup> and by a long and dignified diplomatic career. The new journal, buoyant with some decided successes, dispatched Mr. Willis to Europe (1831), with a guarantee of ten dollars per week, to enrich its columns with foreign notes; and those foreign notes, under the guise of *Pencillings by the Way*, or *Inklings of Adventure* or other such suggestive naming, are what chiefly made his reputation both at home and

<sup>1</sup> George P. Morris, b. 1802; d. 1864. Author of the favorite song, "Woodman, spare that tree!"

<sup>2</sup> Theodore S. Fay, b. 1807; d. 1898. *Norman Leslie*, 1835; *Countess Ida*, 1840; *Hoboken*, 1843; Secretary of Legation, Berlin, 1837-53; Minister Resident, Berne, 1853-61.

## TRAVELS OF WILLIS

abroad. They were fresh, piquant, lively; there was no dulness in them, not overmuch reticence: he opened to the eyes of curious readers shows of street life, of fêtes, of whirling coaches, of delightful interiors which were engaging and appetizing, and what they lacked in restraint, they gained in *petillant* savors.

But he is not accredited to England alone; as *attaché* to the American Legation he has wide entrée and a good passport to the jollities of the Continent. In the winter of 1832-33 he is ranging up and down through Italy, and in the succeeding spring boards a United States frigate, by invitation, for a Mediterranean cruise. Thereby he loiters along the shores of Sicily, of Crete, of Salamis; and so, rapt in that charming idleness which belonged to one voyaging on old sailing ships, and rioting in good breezes and sunshine, he rides up into the waters of the Golden Horn. Mustapha deluges him with attar of roses, and the silken trousers of the Grand Bazaar rustle on his ear; narghilas, spice-wood beads, and embroidered slippers complete the tale of delights from which he wends toward Syrian horizons—journeying with Smyrniots and revelling with Gypsies of Sardis. All this tinkles and vibrates most musically from his harp of travel.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

On his return through Italy he sees much of Landor, then domiciled at Florence, and courteously accepts some commission from him with reference to a book then in course of publication; and some failings or neglect therea-  
ment, on the part of Willis, lead to bitter altercations. The American was inept at all businesses; what could be done by sociabilities, or kindnesses, he would do; but what involved promptitude, stir, swift efficiency, was not so sure of being done.

### LONDON, OWEGO, AND IDLEWILD

It is in 1834 that he writes: <sup>1</sup>

"All the best society of London exclusives is open to me . . . me! without a sou in the world beyond what my pen brings me. . . . I lodge in Cavendish Square, the most fashionable part of the town, paying a guinea a week for my lodgings, and am as well off as if I had been the son of the President, with as much as I could spend in the year."

Through Landor, he has come to know Lady Blessington, and all the habitués of Seamore Place. He makes a visit to Gordon Castle, and the lawns and ladies, and grooms and belted

<sup>1</sup> *Beers's Life*, etc., p. 148.



## PENCILINGS BY THE WAY

earls, with their chit-chat, all flash into his "Pencilings." He makes many friends in many stations; his sense of the decorous is a very live and wakeful one; Miss Mitford says, "he is like the son of a peer!" and it is certain that he had with ladies a most engaging defer-

Children glorious  
Health uproarious  
Paul Fane laborious  
Yours notorious  
M. P. W.

*Fragment of a Letter from N. P. Willis*

ence and a low, caressing manner of speech which were very captivating. His knowledge of little convenances was all-embracing and never at fault; how a hostess should carry herself, how she should throw the reins of talk—now here, now there; how she should cover the awkward *faux-pas* of some inapt person; nay, the very summons to a servant or the gracious way of strewing a pretty dust-fall of pleading

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

and concealing words over a crash of dishes, or of scandal—all this he ferreted and fathomed by quick social instinct. And this instinct filtered through his published lines in what matter-of-fact people would call a pretty constant over-estimate of the exterior embellishments of life. My Lady Ravelgold's tie or her brodequin, or the crest upon her carriage door, or her smile of congé to an unwelcome suitor, would engage from him more serious attention than any discourse from her on poetry or on ethics.

It was not until 1836 that Willis returned to America, bringing a charming and estimable English lady as a bride.<sup>1</sup> The next year saw him planted in a delightful country-house in Tioga County, in the midst of that lovely region of meadows, vales, and wooded hills, where the Susquehanna sweeps northward over the border of New York to gather in its tribute from the Owego and other mountain streams. From this home were written in those days his *Letters from Under a Bridge*; nor did he ever write more winning periods. That old word-

<sup>1</sup> His marriage relations were most happy; this was also signally true of his second marriage (to the adopted daughter and niece of Hon. Joseph Grinnell) in 1846.

quest (born in him) and susceptibility to lingual harmonies caught something new from the bird-notes and the babbling streams of Tioga. I dare say there was an inaptness for farming, and a June baiting of his working oxen "upon potatoes" (when they should have had stiffer food); but never did the swirls of the Susquehanna's currents have a juster limner or the forest fires a redder blazon of words.

All this, however, palls upon his travelled tastes. Book-making, and dramatic work, and paragraphs for the *Mirror* are done awkwardly and at arm's end in Glen-Mary; so the town and its noises swallow him again. A wonderfully jaunty air he carried, moving easily, whether on Broadway or in my lady's salon; an impossible figure (as would seem) for the undress of the country.

Nor were there signs of patient labor, mental or physical. He "dashed" at things; his intuitions often good, keen; but they have presentment only in "glimpses," "inklings." Even his more elaborate tales (if the word be not too strenuous) are made by long aggregations; there is no well-considered logical sequence of ideas or coherence—no dovetailing of character or of incidents. He impresses one as a

bird of too fine plumage for much *scratching*. His best is only—"By the Way."

People nowadays, knowing him only by his tessellated paragraphs, can hardly understand how dominant his name and repute were in the thirties and forties; a Corypheus of letters! Always sought after as patron; always kindly to beginners, and ready with helping words; always cited, yet not noisily insistent, or placarding himself by loud braggadocio; never exploiting his personality for business purposes; having scorn for all vulgarities—even noise. There is a half quarrel with Morris in those days (duly mended); a falling off in his book perquisites; a streaming-in upon his province of newer pens and purposes; a death (that of the young wife) which shakes him; a new burst of consoling travel—to England, to Germany; and, in due time, another home, and another new and happy domestic shrine upon a bight of the Hudson—looking out upon that stretch of river which sweeps from West Point to Fishkill; he called it "Idlewild."

There he wrought, as the years waned, and as the blight of ill-health slowly overshadowed him, upon the familiar topics, with the old lightsome touches—whatever griefs or troubles might beset him. Sometimes breaking

## J. L. STEPHENS

away again from his picturesque covert of a home to the wrangles and din of the city (in the belief that close contact would kindle his sleeping fancies or put nerve into his weakened hand); but at last, under the cumulating threats of disease, stealing away for final lodgement to his lair in the Highlands. His friend Morris is dead (1864); his own infirmities are grappling him closer; he can no longer muster the kindly picturesque forces with which he had written out his *Hints for Convalescents*, or his *Melanies* of rhyme, or his Chit-chat of the hour. It was all ended for him (1867); it seemed, too, as if the bloody markings of the war had blotted out, for many a year, the roseate tracery of his pen and of his teeming fancy.

### THREE NEW YORKERS

AMONG other names belonging to this epoch, and almost lost now, let me bring back that of the famous traveller Stephens,<sup>1</sup> who though bred a lawyer, and associated with merchants, yet told such stories of his wayfaring and ad-

<sup>1</sup> John L. Stephens, b. 1805; d. 1852. Incidents of travel in *Egypt, Arabia Petræa*, etc., 1837; *Incidents of Travel in Central America*, 1841.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ventures—in Arabia, in Poland, in Egypt, and later in the new regions of Central America—as to enlist thousands of readers all over England and America. What he wrote was notable, not so much for its rhetorical finish as for its straight-forward, earnest, slap-dash way of making you know his meaning and share in all his joys and unhappinesses of travel. In later life he returned to his earlier business and professional associations—was active President of the newly laid-down Panama railroad. At Colon there is a monument commemorative of this man of theodolites and of books; while a giant cotton-wood is still pointed out to travellers over the Isthmus as “the Stephens Tree.”<sup>1</sup>

The name calls to mind a fellow of his in the Historical Society—more given to books, but sympathizing in all his archæological quests. I refer to that quiet, scholarly man<sup>2</sup> who, about 1840, had his book-shop under the Astor House on Broadway, stocked with what

<sup>1</sup> The original lay-out of the road involved destruction of this tree; but the admiration of Mr. Stephens for this Monarch of the woods was so great, that he ordered a slight diversion of the line.

<sup>2</sup> John R. Bartlett, b. (Providence, R. I.) 1805; d. 1886. *Dictionary of Americanisms*, 1850 (revised edition, 1877).

## CHARLES F. HOFFMAN

was best worth buying from British publishers, and drawing to its shady depths such men as George P. Marsh, and Dr. Francis, with Mr. Tuckerman, and the eloquent Dr. Hawks. This book-lover afterward did good service in determining the Mexican boundary; but the work by which he is probably best known is the *Dictionary of Americanisms*, a painstaking and (for its time) authoritative work.

Into that Astor store there must have gone, from time to time, in those days, a spectacled, keen-sighted man, halting a little (for he had lost a limb in some cruel accident), who had done work with Willis on the *Mirror*, and better work on his own American magazine—known, too, for certain novels (the *Greyslaer* among them) and known of all frolic-loving college boys by his jingling song of

“Sparkling and bright in liquid light,  
Does the wine our goblets gleam in.”

This was poor Hoffman,<sup>1</sup> who, it may interest the reader to know, was the half-brother of that beautiful *fiancée* of Washington Irving, whose death so clouded that author's early years. After much good and some brilliant lit-

<sup>1</sup> Charles Fenno Hoffman, b. 1806; d. 1884. *Greyslaer*, 1840; *The Vigil of Faith, and other Poems*, 1842.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

erary work (1834-47) Hoffman was smitten by some mental disease, which involved hospital supervision, and he found this under such kindly hands that he lingered for thirty-seven years at Harrisburg. I saw him there, in the latter third of that long interval between life and death, his physical buoyancy not broken down, living amid a great host of illusions; his mind placid, but distraught.

### SOUTHRONS AND DR. WARE

ANOTHER author, at one time having great popularity—who in summer days used to voyage on occasions to New York to look after the printing of his novels of *Guy Rivers*, or *The Yemassee*—was the brisk and alert Simms<sup>1</sup> of South Carolina. He was full of strong self-assertion, and though a most friendly, hospitable man, carried in his step and speech a good deal of the combative spirit and the audacities which he put so cleverly into the pages of his tales of the Revolution. In the present revival of Colonial studies we may possibly look for a new cult of the author of *Mellichampe*.

Another strong exponent of Southern liter-

<sup>1</sup> William Gilmore Simms, b. (Charleston) 1806; d. 1870. *Lyrical Poems*, 1827. *The Yemassee*, 1835.



## THOMAS S. GRIMKÉ

ary forces in that time was Lawyer Grimké<sup>1</sup> of Huguenot blood, who had been educated at Yale; he was, in a degree, a pet of old Dr. Dwight, sharing in some of his horse-back rides through New England, and paying back the attention by an eloquent though somewhat efflorescent *Phi. B. K.* address (1830), setting forth the superiority of sacred literature to either classic or scientific ranges of study. Nor does he omit, in those days of "nullification," to put saving clauses of sound Unionism in his discourse:

"... If we covet for our country the noblest, purest, loveliest literature the world has ever seen, such a literature as shall honor God and bless mankind . . . then let us cling to the Union of these States, with a patriotic love, a scholar's enthusiasm, with a Christian's hope."

This language would have sounded very strangely thirty years later, coming from a literary representative of the Carolinas! He was radical in many directions; advocating, among the first in America, an improved phonetic spelling, which would have delighted our veteran Dr. March, and have given an academic colic to some of our youthful professors. He

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Smith Grimké, b. 1786; d. 1834.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

was also a non-resistance man, out-doing Tolstoï himself in this direction—though his father, Colonel Grimké, had fought bravely and continuously through the War of the Revolution. A sister of this Carolina litterateur was a woman of remarkable energy and spirit, giving freedom to her slaves, and rivalling the most zealous of Northern agitators in her advocacy of general emancipation. Her brilliant brother died in the prime of life—of cholera—while on some educational mission into the wilds of Ohio (1834), not then developed into the nursery ground of presidents and statesmen.

Kennedy,<sup>1</sup> of Maryland, was a genial contemporary of the last, who came to high political preferment—a most genial, kindly man, who wrote with grace, and who threw a good deal of the humor and easy persiflage that equip *Bracebridge Hall* around his sketches of old Virginia life.

Dr. Bird,<sup>2</sup> a physician of Philadelphia (where the arts of Hippocrates and of the muses seem to weld themselves)<sup>3</sup> wrote

<sup>1</sup> John P. Kennedy; b. 1795; d. 1870. *Swallow-Barn*, 1832; *Horseshoe Robinson*, 1835.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Montgomery Bird, b. 1803; d. 1854. *Calavar*, 1834; *Infidel*, 1835.

<sup>3</sup> Instance: the two Drs. Rush (Benjamin and James), Dr. Bird, Dr. Caspar Wistar, Dr. Garretson, and Drs. J. K. and S. W. Mitchell.

## WILLIAM WARE

a bouncing and declamatory tragedy, *Spartacus*—made famous by the loud histrionics of Forrest, in the days when Martin Van Buren held the Presidential chair. He wrote also one or two romances of the Aztec and Mexican times, which won the high commendation of so competent a judge as Prescott.

In New York—where our Northward trend of travel carries us—in those days when Miss Fanny Kemble had found her way thither, and when Forrest made the boards of the old Park Theatre tremble with his “Spartacus,” and “Gladiator”—the blue-covered *Knickerbocker Magazine*, with its Dutchman in his Dutch chair, was a fresh, new venture, with one of the clever Clark twin-brothers guiding its currents, inviting the aids of Caleb Cushing, of Park Benjamin, of the witty “John Waters,” and especially of that William Ware, whom we found preaching good Unitarianism in Chambers Street to benighted New Yorkers—in days when Bryant was battling with the *Post* and with adverse fates. And what William Ware<sup>1</sup> wrote in his *Letters from Palmyra* and his *Probus* is worthy of special note and of a re-reading. His work was scholarly and careful;

<sup>1</sup> Rev. William Ware; b. 1797; d. 1852. *Palmyra Letters*, 1837. *Probus* (now known as *Zenobia and Aurelian*) 1839.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

he deals with scenes similar to those now made familiar by kindred pictures in *Quo Vadis*. But Dr. Ware, with all his vividness and energy, does nowhere obtrude such heated exhibits of the "lusts of the flesh" as smoke and sizzle on the pages of the Polish novelist.

In 1837 Dr. Ware returned to Massachusetts; was for some time editor of the *Christian Examiner*, and died in Cambridge. We shall follow him thither in our next chapter, on our hunt after that coterie of worthies who equipped Transcendentalism with its best stores, and out of whose teachings and stirrings of the intellectual forces of the old Bay State came the establishment of the Brook-Farm project, and the subsequent development of the old battle-town of Concord into a nursing ground for new literary endeavors; and finally, within times we can all remember, making that town the nestling-place of many of our most hallowed literary memories.

### CHAPTER III

**I**N an upper corner of one of the few remaining buildings of the ancient architectural régime at Yale—when there was uniformity (if ugliness), and where one was not disturbed by a variance of style, as large and multitudinous as the caprices of the respective builders or donors—we found two Seniors, of whom we had somewhat to say. One—swart, lithe, with muscles toughened by exposures on the Litchfield hills; the other full of easy, social flexibilities, who had written poetry of religious flavors and was full of the rhythmic graces that belonged to all his speech, and all his action.

The first of these twain (Dr. Bushnell), through his college career, was a little distrustful of his religious stand-point, but ripened at last into a spirituality and an over-leap of dogmatic barriers, which put the watch-dogs of the Consociations in a lively clamor at his heels; but which finally—after an orderly life of zeal and good works—left behind him a track of light which outshines the traces of

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

many honest but over-frighted dignitaries who girded at him with sharp theologic quills.

Mr. Willis, the second of these collegians (but younger by some three years) scaled all the social heights—whether in the drawing-rooms of his college town, or in salons beyond the sea; found easy triumphs wherever he went—giving to conventionalities undue weight and worship—taking position easily at the head of the lesser belles-lettres coteries of his day, but burdening his own reputation by heaps of abounding *Hurry-graphs*, thus obscuring and blurring the delightful piquancies which belong to *Letters from under a Bridge*.

Other names and other work—of varying importance—engaged our attention until the author of *Probus*, with scholarly touch and guidance, led us back to the east winds of Boston.

### A NEW ENGLAND SAGE

ON the south end of the block in Boston, bounded by Avon, Chauncey, and Summer Streets (where Hovey & Co. now sell “dry-goods”), there stood early in this century a parsonage-house with a great garden and fruit-trees around it. The clergyman who lived

## RALPH WALDO EMERSON

there had come from Concord; and on a day (1803) when he was dining out with the worshipful Governor Caleb Strong, there was born to him a son, who was in due time christened Ralph Waldo.<sup>1</sup> When the son was only eight, his father died; the widow, with six children, and shortened means, moved away from the pleasant orcharding the boy had known, to another and lesser home in Boston. Thence the boy drove his mother's cow, day by day, to pasturage upon the common; and he shared one overcoat with his brother Edward—they wearing it by turns—as the weather or out-of-door duties demanded. But such buckling with adverse fates and weathers gave nerve to the lad; and when he goes to Harvard (1817) he is not shamefaced to be “fag” to the President, and waiter at the Commons. He is scholarly, though he “hates mathematics;” he has his period of school-keeping, and chastises a dolt of a boy, with only the placid utterance of “sad, sad!” Later he follows the theologic trend of his fathers, and in 1829 is ordained as Aid to Rev. Henry Ware (brother of the author of *Probus*) in the old North Church.

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, b. 1803; d. 1882. *Nature*, 1836; *Poems*, 1846; *Representative Men*, 1850; *Conduct of Life*, 1860. *Biography* by O. W. Holmes; also by Cabot.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

Of his early preaching, all accounts agree in regard to its charm—of voice, of homely elegance; it was full of sincerity and straightforwardness; “as if an angel spoke and prayed,” said one; rather ethical than devotional, but largely satisfying to those over-used to theologic sermonizing, and to a threshing of old straw. He was always searching for something winning to say, on the side of virtue, and of that religion which grew out of a recognition of the kindly fatherhood of God.

But he does not keep a pastorate. There is a chafing under the harness; somewhiles a suspicion that his conventional utterances in prayer are not earnest and true, but carry a taint of hypocrisy in them; again, there is a doubt as to his practical efficiencies; once—the well-authenticated story runs—he is summoned for consoling offices to a brother of the Church in *articulo mortis*; knowing nothing of his past history or habitudes, he hesitates, he falters, in such way that the dying parishioner broke out—fuming—“Young man, if you don’t know your duty, you had better go home!” The largest duty in his eye, was to be truthful and honest; he revolted at the “official goodness” of the ministerial office.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cabot, vol. i., p. 164.



## EMERSON AS PASTOR

Again, there was something in the administration of the rite of the Communion which made him halt; there was question in his subtle mind of its authorization; perhaps a question of its efficiency—no matter which; his mind was brought to pause; and the pause brought doubt and abstention; so comes a severance of Church ties, but no loss of benignity or kindness on either side.

I find it hard to imagine him trying to accommodate his doctrine to the approval of this or that deacon, or of this or that consociation or synod. In fact, non-conformity was an early-growing and very pronounced quality in him. He could hardly have been other than a non-conformist, in whatsoever church he had ministered.

A pleasant little drift of European travel comes next (1833) into the life of our Sage, in the course of which we hear him lifting up his voice over the hard heads of Scottish listeners in a Unitarian chapel of Edinboro; and more noticeably, we hear him talking—half the night through—with Carlyle, at that master's early home of Craigenputtoch, where Jane Welsh (after six years of widowhood) was chafing at the solitude, and welcoming the "angel visitor" while the winds of Dumfries whistled over the

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

waste. It would have been worth somewhat to listen to that notable Craigenputtoch talk;—the young American zealot, worshipful, an old admiration gleaming in his eyes, yet full of probing, and testing queries; while the shaggy, keen-sighted Scot—curiously charmed by this sleek, serene young New Englander—parries his inquisitive thrusts at mysteries, and plants his square blows at the Sect-ism (whether Calvinistic or other) whose votaries are clad in strait-jackets, and that would put its own limitations upon the large, dominating Divine effluence—all about us and in us—and which withers theologic dogma as in a furnace. Yet that visit to Craigenputtoch was the germ of a great friendship, whose issues are in a charming book<sup>1</sup> fronted by the best portrait of the querulous Scot that I know.

There was not much preaching after Emerson's return, until he opened upon his career of lay-preaching, with head-quarters at Concord.

### EMERSON AT CONCORD

THOSE head-quarters were at the first in the old parsonage which his grandfather had built in

<sup>1</sup> *The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 2 vols. Boston, 1883.

## EMERSON AT CONCORD

the latter half of the last century—not many years before the famous Concord fight (April, 1775), of which the monument now gleams through the trees a little way westward of the parsonage. That grandfather Emerson who built the house was scarce thirty-two when the Concord battle befell; and he was plucky as well as prayerful; would have gone himself to the fight by the bridge if his zealous parishioners and his young wife would have permitted. Next year, however, this militant parson broke away from bonds, enlisted for the march to Ticonderoga, but falling ill by the way, died in Vermont (1776).

The widow two years thereafter was wooed and won by the new minister<sup>1</sup> to the Concord parish, who kept the parsonage awake to its wonted offices for over thirty years—preaching his last sermon when over ninety. It was to the home of this veteran preacher and teacher that Ralph Waldo Emerson came in 1834 to meditate—to roam by the leisurely flowing river which skirted the orchard of the house, and to put into its final shape his first little “azure” book on *Nature*. There too—as we shall find presently—came, after the death of the old incumbent, another newly married

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Ezra Ripley.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

young writing man who was to make all memories of the place forever green by his *Mosses from an Old Manse*.

Carlyle called Emerson's *Nature* azure colored—perhaps from its first binding; perhaps, too, by a stroke of poetic finesse, characterizing the book as tearing open great rifts in the clouds that commonly beset us, and bathing our spirits in the “blue” beyond. However this be, there seems to be something delightfully qualitative in the word—as if the “azure” with all its reaches and its mystery, were not only hemming us in, while we read, but penetrating and baptizing us.

That book of *Nature* has perhaps more of logical form than his later writings; scholastic methods—of thirdlys and fourthlys—not yet given up, and he trying hard to measure his observations or reflections by rulings of teachers. All these he left; not with spurning, not with scorn, but by inevitable growth away from them: the cork-jacket of the schools trailed by him loosely till his own active buoyancy made him unobservant of the loss when it fell away and drifted behind.

But even thus early his later fashion of seership declares itself; and his most haunting words are those which have no involvement in

## EMERSON'S "NATURE"

prescribed ranks, but blaze out with singleness of flame. Thus, in his very first chapter—

"If a man would be alone let him look at the stars."

"In the presence of Nature, a wild delight runs through the man in spite of real sorrows. . . . In the wilderness I find something more dear and connote than in streets or villages. . . . Its effect is like that of a higher thought, on a better emotion coming over me, when I was thinking justly or doing right. . . . [Again] To a man laboring under calamity, the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. There is a kind contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend."

Yet again in pretty tracery of words which loop together engagingly his mystic revels of thought—

"In other hours, Nature satisfies the soul purely by its loveliness. . . . I have seen the spectacle of morning from the hill-top over against my house, from daybreak to sunrise, with emotions which an angel might share. The long slender bars of cloud float like fishes in the sea of crimson light. From the earth as a shore I look out into that silent sea. I seem to partake its rapid transformations: the active enchantment reaches my dust, and I dilate and conspire with the

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

morning wind. . . . The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos, and unimaginable realms of faerie; broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding; the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams."

### EARLY EXPERIENCES AND UTTERANCES

THIS earnest worshipper of the benignities of nature had gone through sobering experiences of life before he was permanently established in a Concord home; that brother Edward—with whom he had shared an overcoat against the east winds of Boston—had died on a health-trip to Porto Rico (1834); the young wife of Emerson, after less than three years of wedded life (1829-32) was dead; so was the brother Charles of whom he speaks so glowingly and so plaintively in the Carlyle Correspondence.<sup>1</sup> But the skies color kindly to him; the loitering rivers of Concord brought peace; and the gentle hill-slopes, topped with pine-trees, gave winning shelter.

It was in 1835 that he married again <sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i., p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> His second wife was Miss Alida Jackson, sister of Dr. Jackson, so well known in the history of anæsthetics.

## HIS HOME

bought that plain, square house <sup>1</sup> on a fork of the village streets, which was ever after his home; here (he says in a letter to Carlyle) :

"I occupy, or *improve*, as we Yankees say, two acres only of God's earth, on which is my house, my kitchen garden, my orchard of thirty young trees, my empty barn. . . . Besides my house, I have, I believe, \$22,000, whose income in ordinary years is six per cent. I have no other tithe except the income of my winter lectures, which was last winter \$800 (1837-38). . . . My wife Lillian is an incarnation of Christianity; my mother whitest, mildest of ladies, whose only exception to her universal preference for old things is—her son—my boy, a piece of love and sunshine. . . . These and three domestic women who cook and sew and run for us, make all my household. Here I sit and read and write, with very little system, and, as far as regards composition, with the most fragmentary result: *paragraphs incompressible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle.*"

I have ventured to italicize these declaratory phrases by which he honestly sets forth a good many of the reigning qualities which belonged

<sup>1</sup>The original building was virtually destroyed by fire many years later, but rebuilt by his friends with such scrupulous fidelity to the old lines, that its identity seemed hardly broken.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

to his address *On the American Scholar*, and that other of the following year (1838) which, on a certain August day—when the “air was sweet with the breath of the pine and the new hay” as it drifted into the windows of Divinity Hall in Cambridge—broke down with its pellets of thought the old tranquillities of the place

I remember well how the echoes of that talk to Divinity students came eddying over the quiet latitude of New Haven, challenging eager young thinkers to a strange unrest, and inviting the heartiest maledictions of orthodox teachers, who would consign this audacious talker to quick oblivion.<sup>1</sup> There was not, indeed, in the address special reverence for those who had denoted the Infinite power as being of a Triune nature—or of a single nature—or yet, of that multiple nature which had made old mythologies rhythmic with stories of groups of gods, and set its wood nymphs (for angels) in the vales where fountains burst forth; not reverent indeed of any one of the old arithmetical summing-up of Divinity. Yet there was in Emer-

<sup>1</sup>It is noteworthy that the *American Biographical Dictionary* of Dr. William Allen—of which revised editions appeared in 1832 and again in 1857—though containing notices of Rev. William Emerson and other ancestors—has no mention of Ralph Waldo Emerson.



## THEOLOGIC BELIEFS

son—in that day and always—a deep-seated, throbbing recognition of a Deity—immanent, wise, merciful—flinging all abroad blessings in flowers and sunshine; and there was in this man, too, a quiet, earnest seeking after those mystic ties of relationship which would make His Fatherhood clearer and nearer.

We have no right, however, to make strong declaratory phrases about Emerson's beliefs; if his own utterances do not suffice no words can. And in this connection I am tempted to question if that delightful biography of Emerson (by Dr. Holmes), was committed to the properest hands. A lithe and witty Montaigne cannot measure for us a broad-shouldered Plato; he is too much, and too buoyantly *himself* to write the life of another. Scarce does the pleasant doctor begin his delightful task, but his own piquant flavors, queries, and humor, bubble up through all the chinks of the story and make us forget the subject—in the narrator. A man who is so used to drawing attention to his own end of the table, cannot serve safely as a pointer at some one else.

Emerson was pure in thought as he was high in thought, and his thought often reached spiritual altitudes where even the front rank of preachers never climbed: hence there was lack-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ing that high fellowship which might have strengthened and stayed him, and the want of which sometimes broke over him with a blighting sense of loneliness.

The Rev. Henry James (father of the better-known H. James, Jr.) talks in connection with Emerson—about his “prim and bloodless friendship.” But James—with the warmth of the “New Jerusalem” in him—craved sympathetic speech in those who talked theologies with him—a most acute, eager man with transcendental ranges of thought. The estimate agrees with that of many; few could get near Emerson; the Marchioness Ossoli never; Hawthorne never; James never; an implacable acquiescence closed the doors between him and very many earnest talkers. He says in his journal <sup>1</sup> (1837): “I approach some Carlyle with desire and joy” . . . but it ends with . . . “only so feeble and remote action as reading a Mirabeau or a Diderot paper.” And again, “most of the people I see in my own house, I see across a gulf.”

About the weather, or his neighbor's pigs, or Thoreau's bean-patch, he could warm; but if one dropped such topics for talk about the soul, or immortality, he froze; on such trail his

<sup>1</sup> P. 359, Cabot.

## EMERSON AT "MASS"

thought was too intense for any "battle-dore and shuttlecock" interchange of phrase.

It would be a mistake to suppose that he had not his saltations of belief on grave as well as minor subjects. He goes on one occasion to High Mass in Baltimore "with much content." "'T is a dear old church,"<sup>1</sup> he says, "the Roman, I mean, and to-day I detest the Unitarians, and Martin Luther, and all the Parliament of Barebones." He asks Thoreau to teach him deft use of a hoe—finds soothing in it; but

"the writer shall not dig. To be sure he may work in the garden, but his stay there must be measured, not by the needs of the garden, but of the study." And again (to Miss Fuller) "when the terrestrial corn, beets, and tomatoes flourish the celestial archetypes do not." [He writes to his brother William,] "I am a little of an agrarian at heart and wish sometimes that I had a smaller house or else that it sheltered more persons."<sup>2</sup>

In the spirit of the last pronunciamento he suggests that all his household shall eat together. The cook declines; but the maid accepts—for one day—after which she declares that she cannot allow the poor cook to dine

<sup>1</sup> In letter to Miss Fuller, p. 471, Cabot.

<sup>2</sup> Cabot, pp. 445-450.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

alone. Under such experience there comes to the front that notable project of Brook Farm (1840). Will he join? He queries—is half inclined—but says (in a letter to Miss Fuller) “at the name of a *society* all my repulsions play, all my quills rise and sharpen, I shall very shortly go, or send to George Ripley my thoughts on the subject.”<sup>1</sup>

### GEORGE RIPLEY AND BROOK FARM

THE liveliest instigator and most earnest supporter of the Brook-Farm experiment was the Rev. George Ripley, a native of Greenfield, in the Connecticut Valley, who as a boy had lived for a time at that Old Manse where we found Emerson. And this lad—afterward so identified with the transcendental lines of thought—we find, oddly enough, pleading with his mother (1819) for leave to complete his education at Yale instead of Harvard. “Languages,” he says, “are better taught at the last, but solid branches, science and the like,<sup>2</sup> as

<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 434.

<sup>2</sup>George Ripley, b. 1802; d. 1880. Associated with Charles Dana in editorship of *Appleton's Cyclopædia*, 1857-63. Literary Critic of *New York Tribune*, 1849-80. *Life* by Octavius Frothingham: *American Men of Letters*.

## BROOK-FARM AND CONCORD

well, if not better, at Yale, where temptations incident to a college life are fewer."

His wishes are overruled, however; he is graduated (1823) at the head of his class; takes his Divinity lessons; has church in Boston, but is not eloquent; had never the gift of public speaking; admires greatly Channing and Theodore Parker; is deeply inoculated by the famous Divinity Address of Emerson, and abandons the pulpit to preach and illustrate the gentle ways of a Christian life by the Idyllic peace and brotherhood of Brook Farm.

It was not an over-attractive place—nine miles away from Boston—near to West Roxbury, and not far from that great lazy loop-let which the meandering River Charles makes, near to Dedham—whence it flows northwesterly past Upper and Lower Falls and round Mount Auburn into the placid reaches that Longfellow mirrored in his verse, and then other and lower placid reaches which Holmes saw from his Boston windows, and gloried in. The farm was not fertile; it did not promise large practical results; there was no water-power in the little branchlet of the Charles (in whose eddies poor Zenobia may have met her death). But there was contagious cheer and enthusiasm in the leader, whose kindly eyes had

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

twinkled with large hopes at the gatherings of the Transcendental Club—who believed that “the hag-like scholastic theology of old had given up the ghost”—and who wrote proudly to inquirers about the new Roxbury scheme—

“We worship only reality, we are striving to establish a mode of life which shall combine the enchantments of poetry with the facts of daily experience.” [And again, later:] “The path of transition is always covered with thorns and marked with the bleeding feet of the faithful. . . . We must drink the water of Marah, that others may feed on the grapes of Eshcol. . . . We are eclectics and learners; but day by day increases our faith and joy in the principle of combined industry, and of bearing each other’s burdens, instead of seeking every man his own.”<sup>1</sup>

These were brave words, and believed by those brave leaders, Mr. and Mrs. Ripley, in every fibre of their being; though the “bleeding feet” must have attached to some period when funds were low or potatoes rotting in the ground; for with all the joyousness and charm (to which old residents testify) and the music, and the dances at the Eyrie and the pretty tunics, and such songs as “Kathleen Mavour-

<sup>1</sup> Frothingham, *Life*, pp. 146-48.

## PHALANSTERY BURNED

neen" from the jubilant voice of young George Curtis, and an old-fashioned farmer for teamster—there was not that close business system which could promise large economic results.<sup>1</sup>

There was a merging of simpler aims—as years went by—in more ambitious Fourierite projects: the building of a great Phalanstery—in the smoke and flame of whose burning (1847) this grand philanthropic scheme went down. It was a great grief for the founder. The *Harbinger*, a journal which had budded under the West Roxbury nursing, was kept alive for a few years more—in Flushing, or New York—whither the *Archon* (Ripley) went: another and quieter career opened for him—of which traces are to be found in the critical columns of the *Tribune*: his widowed years were brightened by second marriage rites; and to the last there was a merry twinkle under the gold-bowed spectacles of Dr. Ripley. For all this I think the Brook-Farm failure left

<sup>1</sup>The original capital of the *Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education*, was \$12,000 (in shares of \$500), of which George Ripley took three: Mrs. Ripley and Miss Ripley five: Hawthorne two; Charles A. Dana three. The association guaranteed to each shareholder five per cent—which was made good until disaster befell (1847). Vid. Frothingham and *Brook Farm Memoirs* by Codman.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

a sore place in his heart. Later reform projects seemed to him, I feel sure, artificial, dishonest—as compared with that first out-put of the seeds of justice and brotherhood; always (for him) there was a rhythmic beat of celestial music in that far away choir of workers and singers—brought together by his agency, bonded by his affectionate serenities, and put upon the road—amidst rural beatitudes—toward the Delectable Mountains and the heights of Beulah. I don't think such retrospects of heavenly tone and tune ever took the distinguished editor of the *Sun* back to the courts of the "Hive" or to the shops of West Roxbury.

If an honest pure-thoughted man ever lived 't was George Ripley; and he carried a beautiful zeal and earnestness into that Brook-Farm undertaking. Much as he enjoyed the genius of Hawthorne, I do not think he had kindly thought of the *Blithedale Romance*: not indeed blind to its extraordinary merit, or counting it an ugly picture—but as one throwing a quasi pagan glamour over a holy undertaking. I remember once asking him—in that dingy *Tribune* office—after the religious tendencies, or utterances of Hawthorne in those Brook-Farm days: he said, bluntly—"there were none—no reverence in his nature." Very likely he would



## DWIGHT AND DANA

have hesitated before putting such critical opinion into cold type. But I could see that old memories were seething in his thought, of that large humane purpose into which he had put his heart and his hope, and whereon the great Romancer had put only his artist eye.

### OTHER BROOK-FARMERS AND SYMPATHIZERS

THERE were others whose hearts were in it; among them that musically accented man, John S. Dwight, whose *Journal of Music* was a legacy for the nation. Charles Dana, too—not long from his two years at Harvard—put as much heartiness as belonged to any work of his, into his foregatherings there with his pupils in Greek or German; with a quick eye for trees even then, and prompt and business-like at twenty-three—as always afterward. The tall W. H. Channing—son of Dr. Walter, and nephew of the great expositor of Unitarianism—picturesque with his long, curling hair and gracious smile, had his kindly admonitions and encouragements to give. And Hawthorne—if not hearty in the regenerative work—put a swift and firm hand into the farm labors, what short time he stayed; but it is easy to imagine his unrest and lack of assimilation on those

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

evenings at the "Hive," when the younger members, in gay tunics, organized recreative dances; or when the poetic Cranch<sup>1</sup> entertained the assemblage with his wonderful imitations of beast and bird notes; or when the boyish Curtis (scarce turned of seventeen) lifted up his melodious voice to some old song of love or of pathos.

Mrs. L. Maria Child,<sup>2</sup> kindly hearted, and author of much pleasant reading, sometimes lent her benign presence—though comparing unfavorably the peaceful ruralities and voices of Brook Farm with the scalding words of the *Emancipator*, or of her own *Anti-Slavery Standard*.

### TWO DOCTORS

THEODORE PARKER<sup>3</sup> was another well wisher, who came over from time to time, across lots, from his near parish in West Roxbury, and who would have put more of bounce and fight

<sup>1</sup> Christopher P. Cranch, b. 1813; d. 1892. Well known for his various gifts—as Landscapist, Poet, and Virgilian translator.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. L. Maria Child (née Francis), b. 1802; d. 1880. *The Rebels*, 1822; *Looking Toward Sunset*, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> Theodore Parker, b. 1810; d. 1860. *Discourse on Matters Pertaining to Religion*, 1842. His *Complete Works* (12 vols. 8vo.) edited by Cobbe, 1863-65. *Life* by Frothingham.

## THEODORE PARKER

into these regenerators of society—had he been made director.

He was a man of force; had worked his way through college; held a brain that loved to grapple with difficulties—whether lingual or logical. He also had a tremendous balance of common sense; his *Dietary or Canons of Self-Discipline* shows this.

He was tabooed by his fellows in the Church who kept within the straits—laid down by Andrews Norton and others—and felt it grievously, but not repiningly. He always liked a good battle; would have fellowshipped admirably with those pulpit adherents of Cromwell who kept their maces or pistols within arm's reach—even in the pulpit. The *élite* of society were always shy of him. He was not amenable to high social law. Edward Everett or Prescott, or other such would have been shocked in all their genteelest fibres at the spectacle of a man in careless or disordered toilette—without surplice or other appliances, or air of stately decorum—thundering from the platform of a Music Hall, about the Eternal Father—as if he knew him! Not all the beneficence and charity that shone in his life could blind them to his democratic commonness of talk. From first to last the cultivated and refined of Boston held

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

themselves aloof. They might admire, but they resented his lack of respect for proper formulas of conduct; and to their ears his weightiest thunders of damnation—whether of a Mexican war or a fugitive slave law—were vulgar thunders, and ugly brimstone odors hung nauseously about the theologic or the humanitarian lightnings of the Odeon, or of Music Hall. Yet he had fathomed many social depths in all ranges of life. In real friendliness—of intention or of speech, he could give points to kings and outdo them. As for his intellectual resources, they were prodigious and imposing; but they had serious flaws. In what touched humanitarian questions, he reasoned—with his heart; his tenderness over and over, upset his logic; his tears put a mist into his pleas even at the Court of Heaven. Again, his sharp, keen memory for particular facts made him neglectful of accepted and accredited records; he had exaggerated trust in himself, in his instincts, his memory, his purposes. He looked down on most men; he had his slaps for Paul the Apostle—as for an over-confident boy; he looked up to none—save God.

“I should laugh outright” [he says in his journal], “to catch myself weeping because the Boston clergy would not exchange with me!” [And

## THEODORE PARKER

again, in a sermon of May 19, 1841:] "Alas for the man who consents to think one thing in his closet and preach another in his pulpit! . . . Over his study and over his pulpit, might be writ *Emptiness*."

He was condemned and scouted by most conventional preachers; even Channing looked upon him askance; Bartol doubted, but befriended him; many shied away, murmuring "Infidel!" Hard words he often dealt back; a fighter full of zeal and earnestness; eyes wide open—though peering through great round glasses; soul wide open, too—but stormy. He thought, may be, more largely of endowments and capacity than the world has thought; holding his talent—not in a napkin—but astir for God's and man's service. So he fared through a short, but very full life—not without angry words and tempests of pitying tears and bitter maledictions of wrong-doers—dying at last as a child dies, in Florence (1860).

Another extraordinary but older New England Doctor of Divinity, who may sometimes have brought his penetrative and not unsympathetic look upon the Brook-Farm company, was Orestes Brownson.<sup>1</sup> He was a Vermonter,

<sup>1</sup> Orestes A. Brownson, b. 1803; d. 1876. In 1840 published *Charles Elwood, or the Infidel Converted*. Es-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS •

whose father died in his childhood, and he was reared under the severe Puritan discipline of elderly relatives. After a youth of struggle, he became preacher—first Presbyterian faith (1822), and later swaying into Universalism (1825); again he was an admirer of Robert Owen, and instrumental in forming a “Workingman’s Party” (1828); four years thereafter he was a good Unitarian and in 1844 (if not earlier) protested against Protestantism, and entered the Romish Church. But even here he lacked due obeisance to those in authority, and became an unruly member. Throughout, he was active in political discussion; oftenest radical, but at times severely conservative; writing sharply and strongly in journals of his own establishment; always trenchant in speech—always vagrant in thought: a strong, self-willed and curious Vermonter!

### FULLER-OSSOLI

ANOTHER interested looker-on, and sometime participant in the entertainments of Brook

*says and Reviews*, 1852; complete works number 19 vols.

## MARGARET FULLER

Farm, was Miss Margaret Fuller,<sup>1</sup> daughter of a shrewd, headstrong, Jeffersonian member of Congress (1817-25) and of a gentle mother who loved flowers; Margaret pined for something more than flowers. At six she studied Latin, at fifteen her tasks were in French, music, mental philosophy,—with two hours a day to Italian; other stray hours were given to Diary-writing, and to “compositions,” which were full of precocities of form and thought. The father meant her to shine, and schooled her captiously—even to the lacing of her corsets and the colors of her robes. Over and over, her own will ran against that exacting father’s will; yet she grew like him—far more than like the gentle, indulgent, extinguished mother. With every-day sight of such extinction under a dominating master’s hand, ’t is not strange that her own masculine power should by and by strike stout blows for the breaking of the bonds which held women in durance.

She came early under the thrall of Emer-

<sup>1</sup> Sarah Margaret Fuller (Marchioness Ossoli), b. 1810; d. 1850; edited *The Dial*, 1840-42; *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, 1845. There is a very good and sympathetic life of her by T. W. Higginson—but not without a certain literary arrogance by which he sublimates his otherwise pleasant essays.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

son's genius; but there was no electrical concert of forces between them; "the room enlarges when she comes," he says; and the horizon widens under that billowy talk which fascinated so many; but—at her going—a large home content and relief always came to him, with no yearnings for a continuance of the spell. "Such a predetermination," says Carlyle,<sup>1</sup> "to *eat* this big universe as her oyster . . . I have not before seen in any human soul."

In those days of her occasional coming to Brook Farm, she was editing, or had edited *The Dial*—that recognized mirror of transcendental thought, of which the prospects had been written by George Ripley. Therefore due reverence sat upon the young auditors of West Roxbury when this Sibyl—of the curled locks, high forehead, half-closed eyes, over-laced cor-sage and beautiful arms—with prehensile grip of taper fingers—launched away into her smooth-flowing, rapturous but immethodical talks. From *The Dial*—given over to the editing of Emerson—she went to the New York *Tribune*, where Greeley was conquered by her graces, and her wide-ranging humanities. For one or two years she conducted the critical de-

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson, vol. ii., p. 212.



## THE OSSOLI MARRIAGE

partment of that journal with spirit and cleverness: but not always with equanimity, or clear foresight. She never ceased to belabor Longfellow, in hystericky fashion, for his allegiance to British traditions and for setting the night-ingle to singing where the Bob-o'-Lincoln should have trilled his roundelay; she foretold disaster and wreck for the literary reputation of the author of *Parson Wilbur* (and Mr. Lowell repaid her in kind).

On her voyage to Europe (1846) she was equipped with exuberant letters from Emerson, to Carlyle, Landor, and others; nor was she ever abashed, nor did she ever count herself "second," in any interview with the cleverest.

Established for awhile in Italy, she encounters there Mrs. Browning, who (in one of her recently published letters) speaks of her as a very agreeable and noticeable person—more enjoyable than her books. It was at Rome, too—in the winter of 1846-47 that the love experience befell Miss Fuller, which transmuted the cavilling, eloquent, self-contained conversationalist into the impassioned, warm-hearted, self-denying wife of the Marquis Ossoli. This young Roman—many years her junior, and attached in some way to the papal service—was

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

an easy-going, presentable, amiable man, not up to the level of Miss Fuller's ranges of philosophic talk. "Wonderful," wrote Mrs. Brownning, "how such marriages come about!"

But it did come about, and had swift and fateful issues—a romance from start to close. This rarely instructed, observant, masculine-minded woman—with the half-closed, languorous eyes—had, on some day of fête, lost herself in the aisles of St. Peter's, or in the corridors of the Vatican. In her bewilderment she had been offered guidance and attendance home by a gracious young official; visitations followed, and a beguiling acquaintance, with all the blandishments that belong to the communings of Roman doves upon the lip of a classic vase.

Then follows a secret marriage (1847)—family and political reasons forcing this policy upon the young marquis—who has little revenue and the new marchioness still less; but there is bravery in her, and the old spirit of resolve; a humble harbor for mother and child (September, 1848) is found in the little mountain town of Rieti—while the marquis feels his way doubtfully, amid the distractions that belong to Roman affairs, while the shadow of a French army of occupation is darkening the

## THE OSSOLI MARRIAGE

air; but Marquises were at a discount in those days of Revolution and of Mazzinis.

The rest of the story is short. The new mother—who had held coteries of bright young people enraptured with her brilliant talk—gathers up her little properties, of relics, of “heart’s-ease,” of classic memories, and sets sail, with husband and child, for home. It was summer weather, but July has its storms; and in one of them, the ship (or brig) upon which the marchioness was a passenger, was driven upon the sands off Fire Island; father and mother were lost; the babe was picked up—dead, upon the shore. This was on July 17, 1850. In 1852 was published the *Blithedale Romance* (presumably written in 1851) on the latter pages of which appears that startling picture of “the marble image of a death agony.

. . . Her wet garments swathing limbs of terrible inflexibility.” I have often wondered if some newspaper reporter’s cold-blooded details about the findings from the wreck—upon that July day—may not possibly have worked upon the imagination of Hawthorne (who knew the marchioness at the “Farm” and other-where) and so given some of its blotches of color to the corpse of the drowned Zenobia.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

### ALCOTT OF THE ORPHIC SAYINGS

AMONG the helpers toward giving a proper transcendental tone to that quarterly, *The Dial*, of which I have spoken in connection with Margaret Fuller, was a man—almost of an earlier generation—who sometimes showed his prophet face at Brook Farm, and whose clever daughter, Miss Louisa Alcott, has been one of the most welcome purveyors of story-delights for that generation of children which grew up during our war of secession. Of course, I allude to Bronson Alcott,<sup>1</sup> of whom Emerson said, in letters (perhaps meant to be private)—“a most extraordinary man, and the highest genius of his time;” and again—“more of the God-like than in any man I have seen.”<sup>2</sup>

In these opinions, 't is plain, Carlyle did not share; he writes to Emerson (July, 1842) “Alcott came . . . bent on saving the world by a return to acorns and the golden age . . . a kind of Venerable Don Quixote, whom nobody can even laugh at without loving.”

This reforming Quixote, who shared the advanced views of most radicals of his day, was

<sup>1</sup> Amos Bronson Alcott, b. 1799; d. 1888. *Concord Days*, 1872. *Orphic Sayings*, 1841-42.

<sup>2</sup> Cabot's *Emerson*, vol. i., p. 279.

## BRONSON ALCOTT

born in a small country town of Connecticut, on the edge of two centuries (1799). From his father he inherited mechanical aptitudes and little else. His schooling was limited and scrumpy; and in extreme youth he was started with a little budget of books and trinkets upon a peddling expedition through Southern Virginia. Mrs. (Hawthorne) Lathrop in recent *Reminiscences* of her father, tells pleasantly how Mr. Alcott, in his later years, used to go over, with gusto, stories of his early Virginian travels. He ingratiated himself with hospitable planters and traders—beginning then and there his rhapsodies of edifying talk; but making few sales and bad ones (as he continued to do all his life). Indeed his aptness for empty pockets was quite exceptional.

He had, however, a quick sense of what was lacking in school methods, and sought earnestly to mend them—believing in the tongue as a great educational agent, and carrying young folks into the arcana of knowledge on the buoyancy of his engaging and redundant talks. Miss Fuller had been sometime a reverent pupil of his; and I daresay caught from his flowing, discursive methods, a stimulant to the more brilliant *ore-rotundo* discursions of her own.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

The *Orphic Sayings*, which he contributed to *The Dial* (under Miss Fuller's administration) are perhaps most characteristic of him; he was rather mystical than profound; he delighted in forays into regions of the unknown—with whatever tentative or timid steps—and although he may have put a vehemence into his expression that would seem to imply that he was drifting in deep waters—one cannot forbear the conviction that 't would be easy for this man of the explorative mentalities to touch ground with his feet (if he chose)—in all the bays where he swims.

### CONCORD AGAIN

EMERSON would naturally have given cordial welcome to Alcott when he came to plant himself permanently at the "Hillside" in Concord. The sobrieties and the large dignities in which the Orphic philosopher wrapped even his shallowest speech and his action, could not be otherwise than agreeable to the man who had a horror of noise and bounce. "The person who screams"—Emerson tells us in his talk on Manners—"or who uses the superlative degree, or converses with heat, puts whole drawing-rooms to flight."

## EMERSON AGAIN

For a little time there was a concerted scheme that Alcott should become and remain an inmate of the Emerson house: but after some trial this home concert joggled away from good bearings: sovereignty does not easily lend itself to twinship. Another sort of home copartnery subsisted for awhile with that youthful, keen-sighted Thoreau (of whom we shall have by and by more to say) who volunteered instruction of the philosopher in gardening arts—to the practical side of which arts the editor of *The Dial* did not take very aptly; indeed some pleasant observer tells us how the young son of the house was wont to cry out warningly—"Don't dig your legs, Father!"

But for Emerson there was always large and fruitful companionship with the pines that fringed Concord hills and that sighed over the shingles of his own roof-tree—with the "fresh Rhodora" whose "purple petals" he has made a "rival of the rose"—with all the towns-people, too, taught and untaught, for whom he has wayside chat and pleasant benignities of question and of consolation—finding his way by quaint, familiar, homely phrases to their hearts' desires and small ambitions—not feeding his wisdom by any aloofness, but mixing with the towns-folk, and measuring minds with

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

them, and so growing into the calm meditative philosophy of his "Musket-aquid,"—

"And, chiefest prize, found I true liberty  
In the glad home plain-dealing nature gave.  
The polite found me impolite ; the great  
Could mortify me, but in vain ; for still  
I am a willow of the wilderness,  
Loving the wind that bent me. All my hurts  
My garden spade can heal. A woodland walk,  
A quest of river-grapes, a mocking thrush,  
A wild rose, or rock-loving columbine,  
Salve my worst wounds."

And this holy unction of the quiet New England village life, Emerson the teacher and the lay-preacher carries with him wherever he goes;—to crowded halls in cities—to the poetry-pages of *The Dial*—to great festive celebrations—to Parker's supper-house in Boston and to the "town-meetings" of Concord. Nor can I believe (with a recent clever essayist)<sup>1</sup> that he carries only intellectual chill with him, or distrust of the "emotions." It appears to me that he fore-answered, in his own mystic, deep-reaching ways, such charges (old as well as new) in his chapter on "Love"; and that there was a fulness of eager heart-beat be-

<sup>1</sup> John Jay Chapman in *Emerson and other Essays*, p. 83. Scribner, 1898.



## EMERSON AS VILLAGER

hind the pen which wrote of his boy (for whom the "Threnody" was made) that he was "a piece of love and sunshine"; I remember too that he opened his screed on "Friendship" (far warmer than Bacon's) with the *dictum*—"we have a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken."

I have talked of *The Dial*—which carries as record of the passing times, some of his best poems—"Wood Notes" among them; and I have spoken of Brook Farm and its Idyllic print of new foot-marks on the Roxbury hillside—both these ventures of new thinkers and planners seeming to have gained much of their purpose and trend from the teachings of Emerson, who was anchored in the repose of Concord; noisy antagonism, and obstreperous advocacy of even a good cause were never in his way. "If I work honestly and steadily in my own garden I am making protest against slave-labor." The impatient temperance zealots cannot bring him to the breakage of all the home demijohns.<sup>1</sup> Even Garrison cannot win him to

<sup>1</sup> But let not this be understood as questioning in the slightest degree his own faith, and practise of temperate ways of life: but only as Emerson's protest against the validity of bolts and bars and pledges, as compared with the guiding dictates of an awakened, individual conscience.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

fiery outbursts in *The Emancipator*; 't is only much later—when the Fugitive Slave Law brings its trail of open cruelties and of moral shivers—that Emerson's humane spirit breaks out into vehement, scorching protest.

Yet that quiet lapse of life beside the slowly flowing rivers of Concord is not wholly unbroken. Sorrows cast shadows over those peaceful meadows; there is a second visit to England (1847) out of which, and the lectures there, came the book we know as *Representative Men*, and the later one of *English Traits*. The biting and searching qualities of this latter, all people who read good books know of. There is honest praise in it, and free speech. He misdoubts mitres indeed—as he smiles over his glass at my Lord Bishop's table; but he hears under all the fustian (and it makes him proud) the doughty step of the English Yeoman and the whizzing of the cloth-yard shaft, which only that yeoman's strong arm could send *home*. To be critical of the follies and the fallings-short of the mother-country, and yet to admire and take pride in her stalwart virtues—this could be done, and *was* done by this quiet, meditative man—measuring his paces by the lapse of the slow-going Concord rivers—in a way that kindled an enthusiasm of full belief.

## EMERSON'S LAST YEARS

He was always a student, yet most recondite in his own processes of thought; not massing material—for the sake of mass; keenly alive to the brilliance that threw light on points at issue; other brilliancies counted only as *feux d'artifice*. Always a good “hop and skip” reader—catching bright flashes of other men’s utterance—for decorative or suggestive usage; but never vitalizing his own speech with another’s thoughts; rather cherishing, or even memorizing them as stimulants to new ranges of his own. Studying words sharply, to the end of using only a few, and putting terseness before all flowers of rhetoric. What was not marrowy never caught his praise; loving indeed so much this essential vitality, that he could excuse or overlook the grossness which (in some speech) went with it.

Emerson wrote little after the close of the War (1865): he aged early, compared with a good many veterans; memory refused him its old favors; his eyes tired him and perplexed him with double figures. A new over-ocean trip brought quick movement to his blood—but not for long. Egypt, with its great range of dynasties, tired him; and so did the Sphinx—out-staring the riddles of “Bramah.”

Yet a brave Optimism keeps by him when

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

the shadows are darkest. "If it be best that conscious personal life shall continue, it will continue; if not best then it will not; and we, if we saw the whole, should of course see that it was better so." He died on the 27th of April, 1882. A fragment of granite marks his grave—a fitting symbol of his nobility of character.

## CHAPTER IV

WE could have lingered longer over the last years of Emerson; they were so full of serenities, and of the memories of a life consecrated to high ways of thinking and to all honest ways. That square old house of his, with the pines sighing over it, is somehow much richer in suggestiveness—even of country delights—than the tangle of rustic decoration which once hooded the arbor of the Orphic philosopher—from whose home at the “Hill-side” will always come pleasantest reminiscences of the daughter who charmed all boyhood and girlhood with her stories of *Little Women*.

The Brook-Farm Idyl—springing largely from the love and conscience of the Ripleys—drifts again before us with its glowing even-tides of merriment, when fine young spirits loitered there and spun their fables of hope.

Brownson, though not of right in our story, showed his tergiversations;—not those of a clown or mountebank, but of a high, close

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

thinker, made unsteady by the toppling weight he carried. Parker thundered and glittered from his theatre pulpit, bringing street-folk to earnest thought about subjects which had been long masked in ecclesiastic formulas of speech.

One had glimpse of that rare-talking, fine-armed, delicate-fingered Marchioness Ossoli, who left little behind her to live;—not even the pretty Italian babe which sprung from the sole, dominating romance of her ambitious life. We followed her *Dial* record; we slipped into the wordy trail of the maker of Orphic Sayings—all which brought us again to the home and the habits of that other serene philosopher, who wore his dignities untarnished by vices or by arrogance, and who slipped from life as easily and calmly as his own Concord River slips from under bordering vines and brakes to deeper and waiting waters beyond.

### HAWTHORNE

ANOTHER Concord name—though not such by birth-right—is that of the Great Romancer,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne (originally Hathorn), b. 1804; d. 1864. *Twice-told Tales*, 1837; Second Series, 1845; *Mosses from an Old Manse*, 1846; *The Scarlet Letter*, 1850; *Blithedale Romance*, 1852; *The Marble Faun*,

## NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

of whom we have had glimpse at Brook Farm, and whose home life had its happy dawn under the roof of the "Old Manse," and its ripened glow at the "Wayside."

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in Salem, in a small, unpretending, gambrel-roofed house—still showing its storm-beaten sides—in a narrow street, almost within reach of the scuds of spray which a strong east wind drives shoreward from Salem harbor. His father was a sea-captain, loving the salty odors of little Union Street; yet, if we may trust existing portraits, there were lines of great beauty and refinement in his face; and a firmness and dignity too, born of an ancestry which the names of judges and counsellors adorned. But this sea-going father-Hawthorne died in a foreign port, when his only son—our romancer—was scarce four years of age.

Then came dolorous times for the little fam-

1860. *Life* (in *English Men of Letters*), by Henry James, Jr.; *Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife*, by Julian Hawthorne; also much biographic material in memorial volume by George P. Lathrop, and (more recently) another by Mrs. Rose Hawthorne Lathrop.

The *James Biography* is interesting—pointed and polished—as his work always is: but rather over-weighted with a redundance of British condescension—to which "manner" the clever biographer has affiliated himself with a distinguished aptitude and complacency.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ily under the Union Street roof; the widowed mother carrying the dolor through years of rigid seclusion; her brother, however—of that Manning<sup>1</sup> name so long and honorably associated with the horticultural development of our Eastern States—came nobly to the rescue; the fatherless lad grew into a sturdy boyhood upon his uncle's lands and woods near to Sebago Lake, in Maine. "'T was there," he says—under a whiff of that impatient self-crimination which sometimes blew over him in his later years—"that I caught my cursed habit of solitude." But he was not wholly right; there was an heirship from close-lipped Puritan ancestors, that—as much as the wilds of Maine—put him into those solitary moods, from which flashed the splendors of his literary conquests. Nor can there be a doubt that he caught in those boyish days in the forests that throw their shadow on Sebago, a knowledge and an experience of woody solitude, which afterward gave sombre coloring to some of the wonderful forest pictures belonging to *Twice-told Tales*, or the *Scarlet Letter*.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Manning, b. 1784; d. 1842, was a widely known Pomologist; contributed largely to the costs of Hawthorne's education, and was one of the founders of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.



## NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

A dozen or more of the most impressible of his younger years he passed there; coming back odd-whiles, for special schooling (which he did not love) to Salem, and to the tall, gaunt house of his grandfather Manning, still lifting that cumbrous roof to the weather—under which, at a later day, our necromancer put little Pearl and Hester Prynne into their glorified shapes.

There are stories of an illness and of a lameness in the new Salem home; and of a beguilement of enforced imprisonment by the penning of a boyish journal—*The Spectator*. I had the privilege many years since of looking over some numbers of the journal—then in the keeping of one of the Manning family—carefully penned in print-lettering, and setting forth among other things, that “Nathaniel Hathorne [so spelled by him at that date] proposes to publish by subscription a new edition of the ‘Miseries of Authors,’ to which will be added a sequel containing facts and remarks drawn from his own experience.” And again—sounding somewhat strangely from such a source, came this pronunciamiento—

“ON SOLITUDE: Man is naturally a sociable being; not formed for himself alone; but destined to bear a part in the great scheme of na-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ture. All his pleasures are heightened, and all his griefs are lessened by participation. It is only in society that the full energy of his mind is aroused and all its powers drawn forth. Apart from the world there are no incitements to the pursuit of excellence; there are no rivals to contend with, and therefore there is no improvement."

An elder sister, Elisabeth, in a letter referring to those days, speaks of his "teasing" habit, as a boy, and of his "seizing a kitten and tossing it over a fence."<sup>1</sup> This seems to strike a false note in the symphonies of those child years; nor do I find other things in that tone until I recall the gleesome way in which old Chillingworth makes the fiery brand of his persecution eat into the very flesh of poor Dimmesdale.

But the boyish teasings, and all the boyish haltings go by; with good school equipment he finds his way to Bowdoin College—with Huguenot flavors in its name—and flanked by pine woods which keep alive recollections of Sebago Lake.

<sup>1</sup> J. Hawthorne's *Biography*, page 99, vol. I.

## LONGFELLOW

### COLLEGE MATES AND ASSOCIATIONS

BOWDOIN COLLEGE was counted an excellent one in those days, and a good Northeastern guardian of the orthodoxy, which was threatened at Harvard. Dr. William Allen,<sup>1</sup> maker of the first good American Biographic Dictionary, and a kindly, pious, unctuous, but not over-strong man, had gone there as president (1820) only the year before the entry of Hawthorne. Jacob Abbott<sup>2</sup> had graduated thence in 1820—the man who afterward opened a “Way to do Good” for many a zealous “Young Christian,” and who brightened hundreds of New England firesides with his beguiling child stories about “Rollo” and “Jonas.” Another Abbott brother<sup>3</sup>—a classmate of Hawthorne’s, was afterward well known for his piquant little histories of “Kings and Queens,” and for his very roseate-colored, but entertaining story of Napoleon.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. William Allen, b. 1784; d. 1868. First edition of *Biographical Dictionary*, published in 1809, while he was Assistant Librarian at Harvard; 2d edition, 1832; 3d edition (greatly enlarged), 1857.

<sup>2</sup> Jacob Abbott, b. 1803; d. 1879. His books counted by the hundred; and he left sons who have won distinction in connection with the bar, the pulpit, and journalism.

<sup>3</sup> John S. C. Abbott, b. 1805; d. 1877.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

A ruddy-cheeked young fellow from' Portland—Henry Longfellow by name—was another classmate of our romancer whom we shall again encounter; nor must we forget that bundle of temperance, anti-slavery, and orthodox enthusiasms, known as the Rev. George B. Cheever,<sup>1</sup> who wrote pungently of "Deacon Giles's Distillery," of a "Pilgrim's Wanderings," under Mont Blanc, and for many a year lifted up his strident voice in that church of the truncated steeple, which once stood on Union Square, where now Tiffany & Co. dispense jewels of a different order.

Yet another member of Hawthorne's class was Horatio Bridge<sup>2</sup>—later, Commodore Bridge of the United States Navy—whom our romancer dearly loved and trusted—who put the cheer of his earnest encouragement into the writer's most dismal days of waiting, and who never lost faith in either the genius or the coming fortunes of his friend. Franklin Pierce, General and President, was of the class of 1824 at Bowdoin—hail fellow with both Bridge and Hawthorne—a life-long

<sup>1</sup> George B. Cheever, b. 1807; d. 1890.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Bridge, b. 1805; graduate of Bowdoin, 1825. Was Chief of Naval Bureau of Provisions and Clothing throughout the Civil War; wrote the *Journal of an African Cruiser*, 1845 (edited by Hawthorne).

## CONCORD MANSE

friendship holding the three together ; and so it happened that when Hawthorne came to the writing of his Forewords for the "Old Home" sketches, he did not allow the qualms of publishers, or the doubtful savors which at that date, in New England, beclouded the political reputation of President Pierce, to forbid a bold tribute to an old college comrade, who—whatever may have been his shortcomings in statecraft—had shown a lion's courage in battle, and had carried into social life a kindliness and *bonhomie* that were most winning and beguiling. Hawthorne's friendships were both plucky and tenacious.

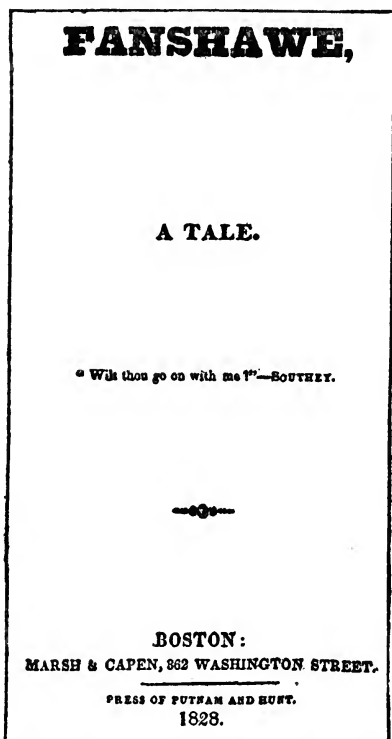
I have named these contemporaries of those Bowdoin days, even as one might name the shapes and tints of a window through which a great light is drifting ; wondering in what degree that dominating light may have been modified (if at all) by the colorings and shapes through which it made way.

### FROM COLLEGE TO MANSE

SEVENTEEN long, waiting, anxious years lay between the college graduation of our Romancer and his instalment in that Concord Manse where the "Mosses" grew. He did not

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

take high honors; he had scored his own path;  
he knew where good fish lurked in the feeders



*Facsimile of the title-page of Hawthorne's first book*

of the Androscoggin; he knew somewhat of  
the cellarage of the Maine taverners; Presi-

## EARLY WRITINGS

dent Allen may have looked askance at him; but the fires of ambition were smoking in him; he had tried his hand at tale-writing; and only a year or two later he put to print at his own cost his first novel of *Fanshawe*. This proved a failure, of which he would have destroyed all trace and memory. The old Manning house in Salem was his home; there, year after year, he wrought on new tales and brooded; thence, he sauntered at night-fall through the salty streets. Sometimes Peter Parley bargained with him for a story, or a half-dozen; other times, and later, the New York *Knickerbocker* (at the hands of the amiable Gaylord Clark), or O'Sullivan of the *Democratic Review* sought favors—all scantily and slowly paid for.

It would seem as if—in the early thirties—the buoyancies of youth had fallen away from him; his poor mother cleaving to loneliness as solace for a grieving widowhood; his two sisters catching the “trick of grief”; and he—as some notes seem to imply—considering if ’t were not best to conquer all the ills of life, by ending it! Here is a characteristic bit of one of his friend Bridge’s sailor-like, swearsy letters, dated 1836:

“I ’ve been trying to think what you are so miserable for. . . . Suppose you get but \$300

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

*per annum* for your writings. You *can* with economy live upon that, though it would be a d—d tight squeeze.”

In the next year the same bouncing friend, on hearing a rumor that Hawthorne had thought of marriage, blows cold upon it. “I am in doubt,” he says, “if you would be more happy, . . . and am sure that unless you are fortunate in your choice you will be wretched in a ten-fold degree.”<sup>1</sup> No such source of wretchedness ever came nigh him. It will hardly be believed that in those years when Bridge was extending to him his rough commiseration, the first series of the *Twice-told Tales* had been published (1837), and though meeting with highest critical approval, commanded little popular success and still less of moneyed return.

Two years thereafter came a lifting of the clouds, when Hawthorne, at the instance of George Bancroft, became “weigher and gauger” at the Port of Boston, with an annual salary of certainly not more than \$1,200. ’T was “grimy work,” as he said, but cheery; and from two years in that service he put a helpless thousand dollars into the Brook Farm enterprise and a new zeal into his laggard

<sup>1</sup> Julian Hawthorne’s *Biography*, page 138, vol. i.



## BOSTON WHARVES

courtship. We have delightful glimpses of him—fumbling over salt ships at Long Wharf—sleeping on piles of sails—stealing away to Salem—forecasting the fate of his *Gentle Boy*—sauntering along the Common or into the old Athenæum gallery—putting an ever new warmth into letters written for Miss Sophia Peabody, with such happy interjections as this:

“Invited to dine at Mr. Bancroft’s yesterday, with Miss Margaret Fuller; but Providence had given me some business to do, for which I was very thankful.

“Is not this a beautiful morning? (November, 1840:)

“The sun shines into my soul.”<sup>1</sup>

Quick upon this came, with a change in the political tides (Harrison supplanting Van Buren), an upset of salt-measuring on Boston wharves, and of that unctuous experience in the barn-yards of Brook Farm, of which we have already had some flavors. There was only a year or so of this; he—with a financial strabismus in his outlook—wondering greatly how that thousand dollars, invested in a “stock company” should slip so utterly from him, down the pretty slopes where pine-trees grew

<sup>1</sup> *American Note Books*, vol. 1., p. 221.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

and where the Apostle Eliot preached! But notwithstanding this he courageously marries; and those twain—mated of Heaven if ever any couple were—went to live (1842) in that old “Manse” at Concord, about which Minister-memories of Ripleys and Emersons hung hauntingly, and where bridal doves cooed a welcome.

The introduction to that book of *Mosses from an Old Manse* is itself a charming bit of autobiography—so charming, so full, and so picturesque, that it warns me not to dwell descriptively upon that idyl in Hawthorne’s life.

Emerson—half shyly, half magisterially—used to break in upon that quietude among the “mosses”—delighted to talk by the half-hour to this man, whose listening was as apt as speech. Thoreau found his woodsy way thither, teaching him to paddle and selling him a boat. Alcott brought his long discourse there—except the new master slipped out by the river side—to unready and sometimes impatient ears. George Hillard,<sup>1</sup> of Boston, too,

<sup>1</sup> George S. Hillard, b. 1808; d. 1879; Harvard College, 1828. He taught for a time at Round Hill School, and was associated with George Ripley in editing the *Christian Register*. Better known as editor of *Boston Courier*; he was a clever writer, of high, æsthetic instincts, true, and unswervingly honest. *Six Months in Italy*, pub. 1853; *Life of George Ticknor*, 1873.

## MANSE VISITORS

always an esteemed and welcome friend, finds his way to this new home—so do others not so congenial.

Even at pre-arranged social gatherings there was a certain aloofness on his part; not joining heartily in general talk; yet watchful at noting all its turns—unless its vapidty lured him into looking yearningly out o' window; yet now and then putting in a query or comment which showed quick cognizance of some of the back-sets, and foregone utterances; or, if not comment, then other provocative of change—a snag tossed into the current which made a parting and a rustling in the tide of talk. Forever, too, he was retreating kindly and gratefully to his solitude and his silent musings, as he floated at even-fall up and down the silent river. Again, and again, I call to mind that letter of his dating from these years:

“I do wish these blockheads, and all other blockheads in this world, could comprehend how inestimable are the quiet hours of a busy man—especially when that man has no native impulse to keep him busy—but is continually forced to battle with his own nature, which yearns for seclusion (the solitude of a mated two) and freedom to think and dream and feel.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Julian Hawthorne's *Biography*, vol. i., p. 221.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

There were undoubted advantages in that loneliness toward which he gravitated; his thoughts did not get dilution by mingling with thoughts of others, but took on density and normal crystallization. Of course, if at start such mind were feeble and had no emergent aptitudes, solitariness could be no way helpful; but if, as here, it tended to explorative forays—if it had instinctive and penetrative out-reach, grappling always after new truths or new collocations of old truths—then, solitude, and a mental attitude undisturbed by other voices or meddlesome interjection of others' thoughts, insure, not only the repose which permits concentration, but a clarity of mind that makes it pervious to the finest and delicatest shades of truth.

But the solitude of the Manse—as the master himself has hinted—was a solitude *à deux*: and before the sojourn among the mosses had ended 't was even more than this—for a little stranger had come, to knit closer the home bonds and to coo with the doves; and Hawthorne's indebtedness to the mistress of his domesticity was always immense—her solicitude, her fondness, her wakeful guard over his privacies and solitariness (if demanded), her keen sympathy, her acute and intelligent appre-

## THE SURVEYORSHIP

ciation of his subtlest word, her never-failing and always discerning praises of his strongest picturings of human loves and embroilments, were beyond measure. And if there were some harsh notes, due to sharp and needful economies, blending with the harmonies of that early home, what an aureole of golden light all those little economies take on under the pleasant narrative of the devoted wife!<sup>1</sup>

### THE SURVEYORSHIP AND LIFE AT LENOX

No such aureole belongs to the chinking gold coin which soon after has a little intermittent out-pour from the till of the Salem Custom-house upon his domestic paths; the place of Surveyor in that old town—whither he presently wends his way (1846), came to him during the administration of President Polk;<sup>2</sup> and again he finds shelter under ancestral roofs where was to ripen that wonderful story of the *Scarlet Letter*.

It is delightful to see the exuberant spirit in which Mrs. Hawthorne makes note of the change in their financial horizon; she writes under date of March, 1846:

<sup>1</sup> *Memories of Hawthorne*, edited by Mrs. Rose La-throp.

<sup>2</sup> James K. Polk, b. 1795; d. 1849; President, 1845-49.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

"My husband is nominated by the President himself. . . . It is now certain, and so I tell it to you. . . . The salary is twelve hundred dollars. . . . Will you ask father to go to Earle's and order for Mr. Hawthorne a suit of clothes; the coat to be of broadcloth, of six or seven dollars a yard; the pantaloons of kerseymere or broadcloth of quality to correspond; and the vest of satin—*all* to be black?"

But Government place and pay do not promote quickened work from the Romancer; how rarely they do! A few half-finished sketches, get full equipment; all the while, too, his eyes and ears are intent; and those ancient retainers of the Government who loll in their chairs—tipped back against the walls in the Custom-house Hall—and tell of fat, gone-by dinners, and unctuous oyster saucers, get their pictures printed in a fashion that glows yet—and will glow for many a year to come—upon the opening pages of the *Scarlet Letter*.

Perhaps, also, the finishing touches may have been put to the *Snow Image* in those Custom-house days at Salem; certainly, too, there were vacation jaunts, and others—to Boston; that good friend George Hillard bidding him always welcome; urging the *necessity* of his going to dine with Longfellow; but, says Haw-

## LIFE AT SALEM

thorne, in his journal—"I have an almost miraculous power of escaping from necessities of this kind." Guarding thus his old solitariness; watching the children at their little diversions which take color from the gray surroundings ["Now," says Una, "you must keep still, and play that you 're dying!"]; while in the chamber above, the elder Mrs. Hawthorne, long estranged from the world by her widowed grief, is dying in earnest. This happens in 1849; and in the same year, with the brooding unrest that comes with a political change—General Taylor supplanting Polk—there is fear that the Surveyorship may pass into other hands.

Friends are active indeed; but friends of other claimants of place, are also active—notably a zealous clergyman of the town, who gets his moral portrait outlined in the family letters, with a raw and red coloring that has great staying quality. What wonder if—with illness in the head of the house, his mother dying, his means small, and his place at the public crib closed to him—there should creep into his occasional writing of that date a lurid tint? What wonder if the old "Inspector," reckoned unfriendly, should take from his pen a black eye to carry into that gallery of portraits which illustrate his great Salem romance?

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

[I wish that, instead of such personal ink-marks, the fiery spirit of the author had been wrought upon to scourge, as it deserves, that scramble for political spoil which still gives a heathenish cast to public service in America.]

I speak of the *Scarlet Letter* as the Salem romance, because 't was virtually finished there; and it was there he was won over to deliver the manuscript to that shrewd, kindly, quick-witted poet-publisher<sup>1</sup> who befriended the author throughout his life—as happy a copartnery, almost, as that of his marriage. Fields was not only sympathetic through and through, with all the lines of Hawthorne's work, but he was actively encouraging and stimulative; he knew how to make his sympathy bear fruit—not only giving those warm tid-bits of praise (which authors have a ripe taste for) but he brought coyly, as it were, and accidentally to his knowledge other waifs of admiring comment, sterling in quality, from far-away quarters. Thus he stirred in the author self-gratulatory currents of blood, which ran into his pen-strokes, and vitalized his industries; nor did the patron forget those little blessings of books which came from the corner of Milk

<sup>1</sup> James T. Fields, b. 1817; d. 1881. *Poems*, Boston, 1849; *Yesterdays with Authors*, 1872.



## BERKSHIRE VISITORS

Street, to cheer his Christmases; and those other-time gifts of other sorts, which kept the animating friendship of the two in a wakeful condition.

### LIFE IN BERKSHIRE

It was early in 1850 that Hawthorne took final leave of Salem—never again, it is to be feared, warming toward its wharves and its quiet streets—and planted himself in a red cottage, upon a pretty slope of the Berkshire hills. The region was beautiful; a little way southward was that Stockbridge realm, which we found all a-trill with Sedgwick solos<sup>1</sup> or duets; and northward—by as easy a walk—was the lifted town of Lenox, where now gigantic villas and flower-muffled wheels of Fashion have displaced the old charming and homely ruralities which once clothed the hills.

To that red Hawthorne cottage—now wholly gone—used to come a-visiting in those days, G. P. R. James, that kindly master of Knights “in gay caparison,” and Fanny Kemble Butler, quick to detect the Shakespearian savors which this American had caught from the great master; J. T. Headley,<sup>2</sup> was there—a

<sup>1</sup> *American Lands and Letters*, vol. 1., p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Joel T. Headley, b. 1813; d. 1897. *Napoleon and his Marshals*, 1846.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

good guide to the mountain fastnesses of the region, who had just won a baptism into the fold of popular authors, by the inspiring fife and drum of his "Napoleon" and of his "Washington." Herman Melville<sup>1</sup> was a not-far-off neighbor, whose *Typee* and *Omoo* had delighted Hawthorne as well as a world of readers; and who at this epoch of his life—distrained of earlier simplicities—was torturing himself with the metaphysic subtleties of *Moby Dick* and whipping all the depths of his thought into turbulent and misty spray.

The Hawthorne cottage was small, but the mistress, by her winsome housekeepery, made it charming; by simple *replicas* of tracery or drawing, Michael Angelo's Sibyls and Prophets preached from the walls: and so did Raphael with some Madonna or "Transfiguration," and Correggio with his cherub pieties; while the elfin children of the family disported with the household pets, or wandered away with the master to the lake-side, where the five-year-old boy throws off his line, and the girl cries out to the mountain shore, for "God to say the echo."

What was written under those conditions

<sup>1</sup> Herman Melville, b. 1819; d. 1891. *Typee*, 1846; *Moby Dick*, or *the White Whale*, 1851.

## THE "WONDER" STORIES

should be written well; and so it was. Many of the "Wonder" Stories grew there; and so did that more marvellous New-England prose poem, about the stern Hepzibah and the blithe Phœbe, which we know as the *House of the Seven Gables*; if not his best book (as the author thought it in his serener moods), it is certainly next best. If Dante had ever told a story of the crime and mysteries which saturated some old country-house upon the Euganean hills, I think it would have had much of the color, and much of the high, fierce lights which blaze about the gables of the Pyncheons! Yet it is all his own;—change as his theme may, the author is redolent everywhere of his own clean and complete self-hood; he is not like the rare Stevenson of our day, on whose close-thumbed pages we encounter—now, Defoe with his delicious particularity and *naïveté*—now, find him egotizing, as does Montaigne, or lapsing into such placid humors as embalm the periods of Lamb; or, yet again, catching in smart grip the trumpet of some old glorified Romancer, and summoning his knights (who are more than toy-knights) to file down once more from their old mediæval heights upon the dusty plains of to-day. No such golden memorial-trail enwraps the books of the Master of

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

Puritan Romance; but, always the severe, unshaken, individual note was uppermost—bred of that New Englandism in which stern old judges of witchcraft battled with wrong-doers, and Pearl-like children wandered in forest solitudes, where silence brooded and paths sparkled in the frosts.

### RELIGIOUS QUALITIES IN HAWTHORNE

HAWTHORNE'S home affections were never rooted deeply in Berkshire; unrest overtook him; if he did not sigh for Salem, he did sigh for a closer neighborhood with seas and their salty airs. He loved change, too; and at West Newton (1851-52) he set himself with zeal to the working out of his romance of *Blithedale*. By a tramp through Newton Highlands and over Oak Hill, he could reach the Brook-Farm region, and sharpen his memory of the woods and brooks; and if the brilliant Zenobia had never her counterpart in the Marchioness Ossoli (who has just now, 1851, gone to death in a Fire-Island wreck), we may be sure that the personality of our author does sometimes declare itself in the speech of Miles Coverdale. Is n't it the very Hawthorne, who has some time reminded his little daughter (when she

## HAWTHORNE'S RELIGION

has stolen her brother's seat) of Christ's teachings—that overhears Hollingsworth, in the chamber at Blithedale?

“The solemn murmur of his voice made its way to my ears, compelling me to be an auditor of his awful privacy with the Creator. It affected me with a deep reverence for Hollingsworth, which no familiarity then existing, or that afterwards grew more intimate between us—no, nor any subsequent perception of his own great errors—ever quite effaced.”<sup>1</sup>

I think there is something more in this than belongs to “the distant and imaginative reverence” which historian Green attributes to Shakespeare. Yet Hawthorne was never apt at church-going or close sermon-listening. When in a religious mood, he did not want his “builded forecasts” to be toppled over by another's conventional masonry or dead weight; he used to urge strenuously—and I think wisely—that the Bible publishers should recast the sacred writings into various volumes of pocketable size, so that those who loved such, might keep to the Christ-story, or the lordly

<sup>1</sup> *Blithedale Romance*, p. 48 (1st edition). The incident respecting his daughter may be found in a letter of Mrs. Hawthorne, date of June, 1850.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

eloquence of Isaiah and other prophets, without the "drag" of statistic Chronicles and the tedious minuscules of Levitical law; always doubting the good proportions of humanly built theologies, and the ponderous phraseologies of the doctors; yet believing—if not devoutly, yet absolutely—in some Supreme Representative of Justice and Mercy and Righteousness, who is, and who Reigns. Else he could never have put poor Hepzibah into her eager efforts to——

"Send up a prayer through the dense gray clouds . . . [overhanging her] from which it fell back a lump of lead upon her heart. . . . But Hepzibah did not see that, just as there comes a warm sunbeam into every cottage window, so comes a love-beam of God's care and pity for every separate need." <sup>1</sup>

Hawthorne had a noble scorn of falsity, which was in itself a good sort of religion.

### NEW CHANGES

THERE was large profit accruing from the two books—*Seven Gables* and the *Blithedale Romance*—so that our author was at length (and

*House of the Seven Gables*, vol. ii., p. 126.

## LIVERPOOL CONSULATE

for the first time) enabled to buy and equip a home of his own—now well known as “Wayside” in Concord. It was an unpretending home, under the lea of a pine-clad hill, flanking the Lexington road, and looking out southerly, over a stretch of alluvial meadow, which rolled into other pine-clad hills, two miles away, in whose lap lay the pretty Walden Pond. But hardly had he nestled into this new home when other and broader changes came, putting a livelier color upon his prospects.

In the autumn of 1852 his old college mate Franklin Pierce was elected President; and early in the following spring Hawthorne was named Consul for Liverpool. The office was not at that time a salaried one, but was worth to the incumbent, through fees, twenty to thirty thousand dollars per annum.<sup>1</sup> This gave a more faery-like hue to the immediate future than had belonged to many recent years of the “Surveyor’s” family; and we may be sure that it was with buoyant hearts that they set off for

<sup>1</sup> Henry James, Jr., *Biography* (p. 141) errs in saying “salary attached was reduced by Congress,” etc. No salary was attached until after the date of Hawthorne’s appointment. Some time in 1853 or ’54 it was fixed at \$7,500. Three months of clerical service in the consular office of Liverpool in 1844, gave to the present writer some knowledge of its inner workings.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

the *Old Home* which was to have a new picturing on the pages of Hawthorne's English book, and on the pages of his life.

### HAWTHORNE'S PERSONALITY

IT was just at this juncture, when the fame of the *Scarlet Letter* and of the *Seven Gables* was fresh, and when the plaudits of tens of thousands of admirers were mingling with the gratulations of those friends who bade him God speed! in his voyage across seas, that I had the honor of meeting with the distinguished author for the first time; and gracious pardon will I am sure be shown me, if I try to recall, with some particularity, the details and memories of that early interview.

The time was April of 1853; a journey southward had brought me to Willard's Hotel in Washington. Hawthorne was a fellow-lodger, in company with his cheery publisher William D. Ticknor, whom I had previously known, and through whose off-hand, kindly offices, opportunity was given of paying personal homage to the author.

Mr. Hawthorne was then nearing fifty—strong, erect, broad-shouldered, alert—his abundant hair touched with gray, his features



## HAWTHORNE'S PERSONALITY

all cast in Greek mould and his fine eyes full of searchingness, and yet of kindliness; his voice deep, with a weighty resounding quality, as if bearing echoes of things unspoken; no arrogance, no assurance even, but rather there hung about his manner and his speech a cloud of self-distrust, of *mal-aise*, as if he were on the defensive in respect of his own quietudes, and determined to rest there. Withal, it was a winning shyness; and when—somewhat later—his jolly friend Ticknor tapped him on the shoulder, and told him how some lad wanted to be presented, there was something almost painful in the abashed manner with which the famous author awaited a school-boy's homage—cringing under such contact with conventional usage, as a school-girl might.

Yet over and over it happened, that the easy, outspoken cheeriness—like that of his friend Pike or of Ticknor—though of a total stranger, would drive off his shrinking habit, and inoculate him with a corresponding frankness and jollity. A seat adjoining his, for a day or two, at the hotel table, gave delightful opportunity for observation, nor can I ever forget the generous insistence with which he urged my going with him for a morning call upon the President (from whom he had al-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ready received his consular appointment) ; and the beaming welcome given by his old college friend. No one in search of political favor could have desired a happier introduction ; and it did happen that the present writer was at that epoch—in view of some special historic studies—an applicant for a small consular post on the Mediterranean ; and as the place had no pecuniary value, and was hence unsought, the path to it was made easy and flowery.

A certain familiarity with the routine of social duties of the Liverpool consulate enabled me to give to Hawthorne some hints, which were eagerly received. The possible calls upon him for speech-making, at public (or private) complimentary dinners loomed before him, even then, in terrific shapes. It would not, I think, be too much to say, that these awful apprehensions cast a leaden hue over his official sky, and over all his promise of European enjoyment. We all know how bravely he came out of such dread experiences, and how he has put his glowing conquest on record in the delightful story of a Lord Mayor's Banquet.<sup>1</sup>

Yet another and more notable subject of talk, I recall, as we sat on a spring eventide, upon a little balcony, which in those days hung

<sup>1</sup> *Our Old Home*, p. 358.

out from the front of Willard's Hotel and gave easy view up and down of the passers-by upon the great breadth of Pennsylvania Avenue—then innocent of trolleys or of asphalt, and swept on occasions with gusty spasms of dust. We had dined together; we had been talking of the great success which had attended the issue of his more recent books; possibly the eagerness with which this had been set forth by a young and fresh admirer had put him into a warm communicative glow; possibly the *chasse-ennui* of a little glass of *Chartreuse* may have added to the glow; however this might be, there certainly came to his speech then and there a curiously earnest presentment of the claims of authors to public favor and to public rewards—whether of place or pension. “Who puts such touch to the heart-strings of a people? Who leads them on to such climacterics of hope—of courage? Who kneads their sympathies and their passions in such masterful grasp? Is n't this a leadership to be reckoned with and to be recognized by something more than the paltry purchase of a few books, of which the publisher (though he be excellent good fellow) is largest beneficiary? Is it not time for a new shuffling of the cards—so that if a man can chant as Homer chanted and set

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

a score of rhapsodists to the hymning of his song through the great cities of the land, he should still struggle on—blind and poor—or serving as ‘Surveyor,’ to be ousted on the next Ides?”

—No, I have no right to serve myself with quotation marks here, as if I were citing the very words of Hawthorne’s talk; ’t is impossible to recall them; yet the large assertion that he made of the dignities and of the reach of the writer’s influences is still most vivid in my mind.<sup>1</sup> Withal there was no bitterness—no pugnacious jealousies—no egoism. It was the talk rather of one looking down from skyey heights upon those struggling at mundane games for a good footing or a winning stroke; perhaps, too, there was a glimmer, here and there, of Mephistophelian mischief—as if he were testing a fervid young listener with a psychologic puzzle. I think he loved putting such puzzles to the brains of others—all the better if young, and intently watching issues.

That listening to his low, yet impassioned

<sup>1</sup> I cite as “in line” with this exuberant talk one of his “notes” (given in the *Biography* by Julian Hawthorne, vol. i. p. 491)—“words, so innocent and powerless are they, as standing in a dictionary; how potent for good or evil they become to one who knows how to combine them!”

words—subtle sometimes, but always clear—and that vision of his pale noble face catching as he talked the last glow of an April twilight—dwells with me. Three months after, I saw him again in the murky neighborhood of St. Nicholas's churchyard in Liverpool, not yet reconciled to the sodden mists of the Lancashire coasts; and again, two years thereafter—at the Adelphi; wonted now to all the fogs and to the juicy sirloins of the Irish black cattle, and with the fears of banqueting speeches all gone by. His inbred Americanism still rampant—nay, sometimes *provincially* defiant; yet love of things English—things, more than men—had grown over him; the ivies of old ruins took him graciously in their clasp, and with such close hug of their abounding tendrils as he did not struggle against. He loved the mosses on stones, and on waysides, and on cottage walls; and if he shrunk from some of the more lusty show of British womanhood, he loved the quiet fireside virtues and stanchness which adorned it; and came to have dear images of the *Old Home* planted and glowing in his heart.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

### EUROPEAN LIFE

EUROPEAN life made deep markings upon his sensitive nature, but he did never struggle to put on its costumes or customs; as his British biographer says with a tender complacency—he was “exquisitely and consistently provincial.” And we say—thank God, he guarded sedulously his Americanism; nor did he take on with any assiduity the “er’s—er’s” of Cockneydom, or the dilettanteism of foreign Capitals—with which so many expatriated Americans have latterly baptized their speech and their souls.

In 1857 Hawthorne resigned his office of consul—perhaps weary of service, perhaps doubting if the political skies would be benign under the new President Buchanan. The emoluments of the office, though not so large as hoped for, had put him at ease. Mrs. Hawthorne, with health disturbed by cool British fogs, had taken a wintering in summer latitudes. There had been jaunts to London, to Scotland, and through all those green ways of Warwickshire which so delightfully freshened the pages of that book of *Our Old Home*, which on the score of literary texture is among the fairest and daintiest he ever wrote.

## HAWTHORNE IN ITALY

On a cold, sour day of January (1858), he arrived in Rome, with his family, via Paris and Marseilles; missing greatly the "comforts" which wrapped him in English homes; scarce getting warmth into his bones, save when the heavy, mat-like curtain at the door of St. Peter's flopped behind him, and the mild airs of the great temple bathed him in their placid serenities.

Later the currents of his blood were pleasantly stirred by the infectious jollities of the Carnival; and still further stirred when, in the spring (1858), he encounters the romance-laden winds which blow over the Florentine valley; and from his eyrie on the height of Bellosguardo, he looks athwart the Arno, and the Brunelleschi dome to the hills by Fiesole; and out of his crumbling square tower of Montauto—a little way southward from the Porto Romano—filches the romantic material for his new story of Donatello. As the summer season waned, he went to Rome again, where the Campagna fever smote one of the dearest of his flock—a new and bitter experience unfolding for him, as she (the eldest of his daughters) hovers between life and death. There were friends indeed to lend their sympathies; for he met the Storys at Rome, and had hob-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

nobbed over and again with that full-brained poet, architect, sculptor, talker—who had graced so many arts 't was hard to tell in which he was master. General Pierce, too, taking his post-presidential range of travel, had brought his home-like presence into the rooms where fever brooded, and into the Roman neighborhood where the beat and bubbling of the fountain of Trevi throbbed upon the air. Browning also, with his world's-man's tact, had won upon the heart of Hawthorne; and so had that delicate poetess—sharer of Browning's home—who has brightened the Casa-Guidi windows for all who love Italy, or liberty, or poesy.

There are many pleasant hours with Motley the historian, on a balcony which overlooks the riot and joyousness of a Roman Carnival; and in the succeeding spring (1859) he fares away from the great city, through the Rhone Valley, Switzerland, and Paris, to England.

Here he devoted himself for four months to the re-writing of his *Marble Faun*<sup>1</sup>—mostly at a little watering-place on the extreme north-eastern shore of Yorkshire; he has his stay, too, at Leamington and Bath, and a swift whirl

<sup>1</sup>The book was published in England under the name of *Transformation* (which he greatly disliked), in February, 1860.



## HOME AGAIN

of "the season" in London. Under date of May 17, 1860, he says: "You would be stricken dumb to see how quietly I accept a whole string of invitations, and what is more, *perform my engagements without a murmur.*"

In the month of June he sailed for America; and with the opening burst of a New England summer, found himself again at the "Way-side" in Concord. Rampant weeds were growing in the little garden; the clock-like ministrations of trained English servants are wanting; mayhap, too, there was a silent bemoaning of the lack of those English domestic appliances (rare then in New England country houses) with which the children had known years of dalliance; more than all, those bodeful political mutterings were stirring the air, which were to grow in volume until the placid America the romancer had known, should put on, and wear for years, the red robes of war.

## HOME AGAIN AND THE END

RESIDENCE and travel in England had quickened all Hawthorne's rural susceptibilities. No man indeed, howsoever browbeaten by British bounce or arrogance, can come away from a long stay in lands of the English, but the thought of their tender care for trees and lawns

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

and all green and blooming things, will sweeten his memories and exalt his rural instincts. Hawthorne made no exception; he would have strown, at least, a handful of the leafy allurements which had beguiled him in Warwickshire or Somerset about the narrow enclosure by the Wayside; he had even ordered a few trees and shrubs for his plantations from abroad; but the weeds and wildness were in conquering ranks. Mrs. Lathrop, in her pleasant "Memories," speaks pathetically of the "horrifying delinquencies of our single servant;" and again "we did not learn to save money, because our parents could not." Their generous but disorderly charities forbade—would have forbidden, even though Consular revenue had been doubled.

The quiet of Concord with its idling rivers and rounded hills has much that is Arcadian; yet the deep gravel cuts which flank the railway, and its prevailing growth of birch and of pine do not carry large agricultural promise; nor did Hawthorne's score or more of acres tempt him to active husbandry.

Perhaps the reader may be interested in a paragraph or two from an unpublished letter of the romancer relating to this topic—dated a few years after his return. The present writer

## HAWTHORNE'S FARMING

had ventured to send him a little book <sup>1</sup> setting forth some of his own experiences of farm life. After acknowledging this with some kindly words of praise (of which he was never niggard), he continues:

"I remember long ago your speaking prospectively of a farm; but I never dreamed of your being really much more of a farmer than myself, whose efforts in that line only make me the father of a progeny of weeds in a garden-patch. I have about twenty-five acres of land, seventeen of which are a hill of sand and gravel, wooded with birches, locusts, and pitch pines, and apparently incapable of any other growth, so that I have great comfort in that part of my territory. The other eight acres are said to be the best land in Concord, and they have made me miserable, and would soon have ruined me if I had not determined never more to attempt raising anything from them. So there they lie along the road-side, within their broken fence, an eyesore to me, and a laughing-stock to all the neighbors. If it were not for the difficulty of transportation by express or otherwise, I would thankfully give you those eight acres."

But he has his walks and his fertile musings along the brow of that pine-clad hill—can see thence the approaches to that home, upon

<sup>1</sup> *My Farm of Edgewood*, first published in 1863.

# The Wey-side.

Concord, Jan<sup>y</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> '64.

My dear Mr. Mitchell.

I am full of delight and  
accompany it your book. I re-  
member long ago, at Liverpool, your  
speaking prospectively of a farm.  
But I never dreamed of your  
being really much more of a  
farmer than myself; whose ef-  
forts in the <sup>lines</sup> ~~way~~ only make  
me the father of a progeny  
of cubs in a garden pot. I  
have about twenty-five acres of  
land, seventeen of which are a  
hill of sand and gravel, covered  
with briches, weeds, & potash  
pines, and apparently incapable  
of any other growth; so that I

Facsimile of the first page of the foregoing letter from Hawthorne

## CONCORD HOME

whose roof-top he has built a clumsy tower-chamber,<sup>1</sup> on whose inner walls he has inscribed the legend: "There is no joy but calm." Thither he can scud for shelter if too much of peripatetic philosophy impends; but he always welcomes the tread of Emerson along the locust walk; and is often stirred into healthier and more bracing moods by the sharp, staccato utterances of that keen observer and out-of-door man, Thoreau. But his lifted chamber is not after all the tower of Montauto; and there were delightful fashions of growth in green Warwickshire that he misses on the meadows of Concord. What wonder if seasons of *mal-aise* come to him, now that the beguiling European experiences, which had kindled his manhood into bursts of mental joyousness, have passed forever from his grasp? What wonder if little ailments or annoyances put—every year—a heavier drag upon his march along the wayside of life? What wonder if his imagination is beclouded with colors more and more murky as he wrestles with the old brain-webs of a "Dolliver" or a "Septimius Felton"?

<sup>1</sup> "I really was not so much to blame here as the village carpenter, who took the matter into his own hands and produced an unimaginable sort of thing, instead of what I asked for. If it would only burn down! But I have no such luck."—Hawthorne's letter of April, 1862.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

The journeyings of years, and perhaps the weeds at his own wayside, gave him yearning for new and home travel.

He goes southward, with his kind, jolly-spirited friend Ticknor to cheer and guide him. Ticknor is brought back by the undertakers;<sup>1</sup> Hawthorne follows—alone, trying to be strong and unmoved. Once more he journeys—now with his old friend President Pierce—his voice shaking when he bids them adieu at his Concord home.

The friends go northward; and on the 18th of May, 1864 (ten days after the great Battle of the Wilderness), reach the Pemigewassett Inn, in the pretty valley through which a New Hampshire country road trends toward the Franconia Mountains. They had adjoining rooms; so, twice or thrice in the night Pierce steps to the bedside of his companion, who seems sleeping quietly—very quietly. No change ever came more quietly; no groans, no sighs, no conscious pain even—only the gates opened—for this, our great romancer, and our greatest master of English prose—and he passed through by night.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ticknor died a few days after setting out upon the journey, in Philadelphia (April, 1864).

## CHAPTER V

WE lingered long in our last chapter—but who shall venture to say unduly—over the career of that master who put a *Scarlet Letter* ineffaceably upon the history of the land. We traced him from his childish home in the quaint Salem house (still standing) to the wilds of Sebago Lake, where a maternal uncle gave him the run of great woods; and thence to the near college of Bowdoin, where the suave Dr. Allen, of the *Biographical Dictionary*, presided, and two brothers Abbott found the *Way to do Good*; where also Bridge and General Pierce, in their young days, befriended Hawthorne, and where the Rev. George Cheever learned to slash with sharp rhetoric at unbelievers, slave-mongers and Distillery folk.

Again we followed the Master to Salem, and to the gauging of barrels on Boston wharves; then that pretty episode of Brook Farm came, where a Countess Ossoli flashed into view, and

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

that prettier episode of love-making, which ended with the cooing of doves in an "Old Manse" of Concord. Next came another Salem experience, when the Master scored the corridors of the old Custom-house with portraits of hangers-on, and followed this with a retreat to Lenox woods, where Sedgwicks chirped and Herman Melville strode mystically on the scene. George Hillard, too, brought sometimes his serenities and keen tastes thitherward; and later, at Concord again, in company with the wise Emerson and the gracious James T. Fields, he buoyed up the Master's spirits when they drooped; and all gave joint huzza when the Blithedale story-teller sailed away for England and "good pay."

We saw him there; he lingered there under the mists and smoke by the belfry of St. Nicholas in Liverpool; and under leafy streets in Leamington; and again on roads in Italy, where Story cracked his jokes and told of *Roba di Roma*; and where the sweet small voice of Mrs. Browning smote upon the ear of reverent listeners. Thereafter came the sorrowful waits upon Campagnan fever—the return—the small Concord make-shifts for the scenes and verdure, and tower of Bellosguardo—the sinking spirits—the little vain bursts of home travel—



## THE "MARBLE FAUN"

the poignant pen, eager but trembling, with the ink splashes that only half figured a *Dr. Doliver*—all this put out of sight by the entire completed tale of Monte Beni, where four figures reign.

Only four, who enter upon the first page of the *Marble Faun*, and never vanish till the curtain drops on that great gloom-haunted background, where Roman dirges sound and Roman temples and tall houses block the soft Italian sunshine. Virtually, only these four figures—lovely Hilda, transplanted from New England fields, with a pearly flash of Puritanism playing on her forehead; Kenyon—the masculine half of Saxon elements, at play in Etruscan fields; Miriam—all a-glitter with jewels of beauty and the shimmer of some mysterious coronet, flashing blood-red; last, Donatello—Arcadian, graceful, bewitching, with an engaging ductility, and only such little glow of humanity as steals upon reflected rays from the blood-red coronet of Miriam.

### A NATURALIST

IN my report of those last days of Hawthorne at Concord, there is casual mention of an investigating, yet much younger, man, who from

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

time to time found welcome at the Wayside. He was of Concord birth, but by inheritance he united the blood of a Norman ancestry with Puritan severities, and also Scottish *gumption* with Quakerish stubbornness. This was Henry Thoreau;<sup>1</sup> his father, failing in other means of livelihood, had become a pencil manufacturer; in this, the son joined him for a time, but having learned to make pencils better than anyone else could make them, he lost interest in the craft. So, when he had learned in Walden woods to live upon less money than other men, he lost interest in the experiment. His thought ranged above money-making; yet he was keen-sighted, lithe as an Indian, and almost as swart and hale. In many points he might have posed for Hawthorne's Donatello, while the exuberance and force of his love for nature would have almost made one look curiously for fawn-tips on his ears. If somewhat Pagan in his belief, he was not Pagan in lassitudes. Withal he was a scholar—had graduated with good rank at Harvard—was apt, and specially

<sup>1</sup> Henry D. Thoreau, b. 1817; d. 1862. *A Week on Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, 1845-47; *Walden*, 1854. *Biographies*, by Wm. Ellery Channing and F. B. Sanborn, are marred by over-praise; Alger (*Solitude*) and Lowell, on the other hand, in their biographic mention are somewhat prone to detraction.

## HENRY THOREAU

appreciative in classic ranges, but disposed to be jealous and contemptuous of that side of classicism which tended to pride of learning, and which made the accomplishment of the Sir William Temples; yet, if a cricket chirped in his ear, as he scuffled with his hoe in his bean-patch, he harked back straight to the Cicada of Anacreon, like a Greek.

Thoreau is probably best known to the world by that curious experience of his in Concord, where he built his own house under the pines—measuring costs by pennies, illustrating a great many idle economies, coquetting with the birds, having friendships with the squirrels and woodchucks, living abstemiously, measuring with nicety every depth and shallow of his watery domain of Walden—which he finds deepest where the diameters of breadth and length intersect. This seems to us not a great discovery; yet, observe how characteristically he twists it into solution of ethical problems:

“Such a rule [of the two diameters] not only guides toward the sun in its system and the *heart in man*, but draws lines through the length and breadth of the aggregate of a man’s particular daily behaviors and waves of life, into his coves and inlets, and *where they intersect* will be the height or depth of his character.”

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

This tempts to a new sounding of motives, and to a question—if the mixing of Norman blood with English Puritanism, and Scotch covenanting sharpness in this philosopher of the woods, may not suggest new ways of measuring the shallows and depths of the composite New England character? It is an altogether curious figure—this acute man of the mixed nativities, and with the rhythms of such as Simonides singing in his ear—makes there, upon the Walden shores—giving furtive “tips” to the birds and squirrels—shrugging his shoulders contemptuously at any buzz of civilized sounds, and on the alert for the thunder of some falling tree or the creak of ice-cakes which grind out their chorus to cheer his solitude.

### REFORMER AND WRITER

BUT he tires of it and goes to village life again; has his voyagings up and down the As-sabet or the Concord among the rushes and overhanging wild-vines—has his bouts at school-keeping—his lingerings, and listenings at the Emerson home (whereby he possibly falls into certain imitative modes of thought or talk—as weaker men will always plunge unwittingly into the footfalls of stronger ones .

## THOREAU AS REFORMER

who go before through wastes) ; he lectures, too, year after year, there in Concord and other near places—always having something earnest and piquant to say, but not alluring crowds; misdoubting always what the world calls success, and scorning applause as the perquisite of weak men.

Throughout he was an arch-reformer ; insistent upon largest liberties in home, in state, in church ; setting a man's individuality at the top of creeds and law ; going to jail rather than pay taxes he thought unjust ; riotously applauding when that stanchest of radicals and most illogical of humanitarians, Ossawatimie Brown, bundled his pikes into the Virginia mountains, and preached his gospel of revolt ; and when the cruel but lawful and logical end came to that humane furor with the drop of the Charlestown gallows, it stirred Thoreau, as it did many another fervid and waiting soul, into those resentments which ended in a desolating and renovating war.

One can hardly know this author, except by reading him thoroughly, up and down and across, in every light, every season, every labor. The truths of nature quiver in his talk, as color quivers on a chameleon ; and when we have caught the changing tints—by how much

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

are we wiser? . Full-paced naturalists tell us that he is not always to be relied upon for naming of common facts; and the uncommon ones in his story are largely so, because they radiate (for the time) his *shine* of emotion, of impulse, of far-away comparisons. Yet what tender particularity in his *Excursions*—not showing us great wonders; no more does White of Selborne; yet what large country love and yearning! 'T is a grandchild, telling us of the frosty beard and the quaking voice of the grandpapa.

How true is that snowy foliage of his—"answering leaf for leaf to its summer dress!" Even indoors his loving observation does not pause; but—

"Upon the edge of the melting frost of the window, the needle-shaped particles are bundled together so as to resemble fields waving with grain, or shocks rising here and there from the stubble."—*Excursions*, p. 67.

### THOREAU'S LATER REPUTATION

UNLIKE many book-making folk, this swart, bumptious man has grown in literary stature since his death; his drawers have been searched,

## THOREAU'S QUALITIES

and cast-away papers brought to day. Why this renewed popularity and access of fame? Not by reason of newly detected graces of style; not for weight of his *dicta* about morals, manners, letters; there are safer guides in all these. But there is a new-kindled welcome for the independence, the tender particularity, and the outspokenness of this journal-maker.

If asked for a first-rate essayist, nobody would name Thoreau; if a poet, not Thoreau; if a scientist, not Thoreau; if a political sage, not Thoreau; if a historian of small socialities and of town affairs, again not Thoreau. Yet we read him—with zest, though he is sometimes prosy, sometimes overlong and tedious; but always—Thoreau.

The same unique interest belongs to the blare of Whitman, to the crookedest things of Browning, to Carlyle at his ugliest. These men do not train in bands; they are not safest of critics; they do not get set up as exemplars in young ladies' colleges; they do not adorn the Anthologies of Miss Prim and of teachers. But they are alive; they think; they break rules—but they also break tedium, and stupid meandering in the light of my lady's grammatic enforcements. They have pulse and a buoyant life, that engages.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

There is good appetite for a man's speech who has the courage to be himself. We love to lay hold of his nodosities and angularities, when he makes no concealment and does not weary and embrate himself for half his life in trying to cover them up or to round them down. That a man should take to a hut and give over bath-tubs, confits, prim clothes, and conventionalism, is not in itself matter of interest or a tone of conduct that would pique curiosity or study; but that he should do this honestly, straightforwardly, consistently, in the evolution of a system of what he reckons humane conduct of life—this makes the matter curious and entertaining. It approaches (in a humble way, indeed) that other honest human experience, justified by its story, which was set forth many generations ago in Gascony, by the *Sieur Michel de Montaigne*.

But I cannot linger longer with the sage of *Walden*, who sang and philosophized, and played the flute and broke the laws. Emerson has said of him at his funeral (1862), in sweet and tender words of consecration—better worth than the heaped-up praises of a biographer—"Wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a home."



# BOWDOIN COLLEGE

## A POET'S YOUTH

AMONG those we encountered at Bowdoin College in the twenties was a ruddy-faced, engaging lad<sup>1</sup> who came from Portland—who was born in a great house, still standing on the edge of the water, and who had by nature poetic graces and aptitudes, and grew to a love of languages, and of their billowy flow from all tongues. In his early teens some of his verse finds lodgement in the corners of Portland journals; he stands fairly in his class, nourishing very ambitious hopes; “I *will* be eminent in something,” he writes to his father (date of 1824), and pleads for a year of post-graduate study at Harvard, where he says “\$183 per annum” will pay all expenses.<sup>2</sup>

The father, who is a discreet man of high reputation—though he looks askance at the “pretty poems”—does favor the further graduate course; all the more when the authorities at Bowdoin hint at a “chair of modern lan-

<sup>1</sup> Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, b. 1807; d. 1882. *Voices of the Night*, 1839; *Evangeline*, 1847; *Hiwatha*, 1853; *Dante*, 1867-70; *Biography*, mainly made up of extracts from his letters and journals (by Samuel Longfellow), 2 vols., 8vo, 1886, and *Final Memorials*, 1 vol., 1887.

<sup>2</sup> *Biography*, vol. i., p. 59.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

guages" for the son, if he will equip himself by a year or two of study abroad.

This opened his career; in May, 1825, he set off for New York, to take ship for Europe. Perhaps the coach went by the Colonial Tavern at Sudbury—who knows? Certainly he went by Northampton, where the master of the Round Hill school gave him letters; thence to Albany—a curious up-country divergence!—perhaps to have the delights of that sail down the Hudson. His ship is delayed; so he coaches to Philadelphia, where he catches one glimpse of that ancient hospital, under whose roof, twenty years later, he brings about the last sad meeting of Gabriel and Evangeline.

We can fancy what that European trip may have been for a youth of nineteen—full of poetic fervors—loving gayeties—rusticating at Auteuil—meeting Cooper and Lafayette in Paris—supping with Washington Irving and Alexander Everett in Madrid—dancing with Cordovan girls—lingering in Spain for months, and wintering upon the Piazza Santa Maria Novella at Florence.

For three years it is all a holiday; yet he does not forget his task-work or his ambitions; *Outremer* is simmering in his thought; and with its pretty *podrida* of old tales, dashes of

## LONGFELLOW

sentiment, glowing descriptions (all set aglow by memories of Geoffrey Crayon, of Sterne's *Journey*, and of *Childe Harold*), does not have final outcome in book form until some years after his return.<sup>1</sup>

In 1828 he is in Venice—"most wonderful city;" a twelvemonth later at Dresden and Göttingen, and in the same year returns to Maine, where he is Professor at Bowdoin; and in 1831 he is wived and domiciled in a house of Brunswick. But the horizon seems small there for a young man of his ambitions; and at a hint from President Quincy that his name has been favorably considered for the Professorship of Modern Languages at Harvard (from which George Ticknor is about to retire), he gives up his place at Bowdoin (1835) and sails again over seas to equip himself with a knowledge of the northern languages of Europe.

Then comes a rich burst of Scandinavian travel, among the drooping firs, and the "white-haired boys;" this fills the summer, and in November his young wife dies in Rotterdam. "His household gods were broken." But there came consoling travel up and down the Rhine and in the shadows of the Swiss

<sup>1</sup>First number issued in 1833; second in 1834; in completed book form (Harpers), 1835.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

mountains. And upon the very fore-front of that Romance (of *Hyperion*) over whose melancholies his spirit is brooding—to wipe out sorrows of his own—stand recorded those words of a German master he loved: “Look not mournfully into the Past. It comes not back again. Wisely improve the Present.”

Those who read *Hyperion* in their young days (it first appeared in 1839) will remember with something like a thrill, how, amid its lesser charms of laughing vineyards, mountain pictures, rollicking student songs, and tender, sorrowful musings, there gleamed now and then across its pages (as when the serene Mary Ashburton appears) the glow of a stronger, purer light, promising calm and rest! Yet this light vanishes as it came, leaving the hero Paul Flemming wrapt in gloom.

### A HARVARD PROFESSOR

IN December of 1836 Longfellow was established in Cambridge. Judge Story was still in the law school; Charles Sumner came thither to lecture; George Hillard was at hand for evening talks or smokes; so was that jolliest of Greek professors, Felton, with wit always

## LONGFELLOW

sparkling through his glasses. Bowen and Sparks are grubbing industriously at their documentary work; both the older and younger Wares had their pleasant preachments; poor Follen—who perished in a burning Sound steamer (Lexington) four year later—could give the young professor “points” in German; and the elderly and dignified Washington Allston was still residing at the “Port,” able and willing to compare notes about the Laocoon and the charms of the Pitti palace.

The next year (1837) he rents two chambers in that famous Craigie House (where he died); his lectures are popular; his spirits jubilant; his health excellent; his expectations all of the rosiest. Bright poems from his pen, with a fresh accent, find their way into journals and annuals far and near. Chiefest among these are those tender and solemn-sounding *Voices of the Night* which in the year 1839 were assembled in a little drab-colored volume that to-day stands on my shelves, and was bought upon its issue, with admiring zest, in Sophomore days at Yale.

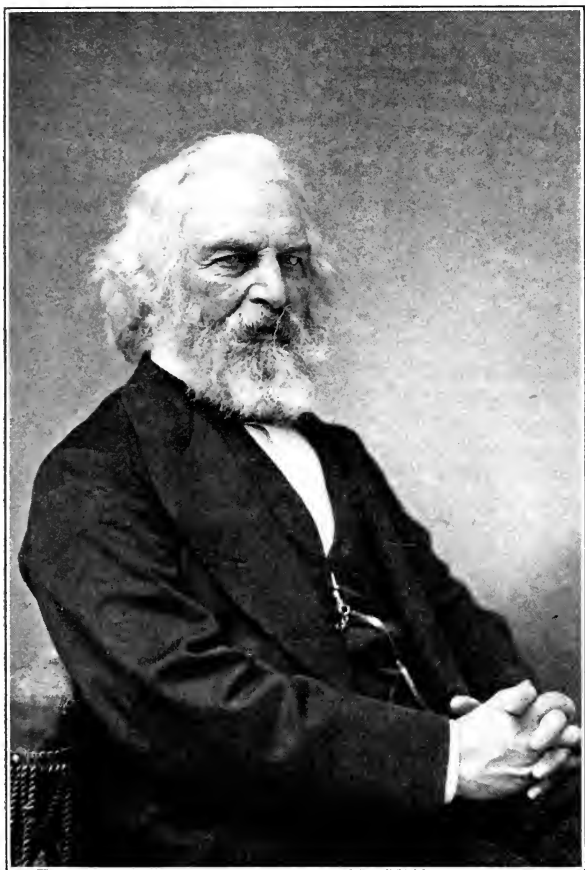
That book had great vogue with young students, and its

Πότνια, πότνια νύξ,  
ὑπνοδότειρα τῶν πολυπόνων βροτῶν

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

caught a gay scansion from many an enthusiast who was not given to Greek in general. Perhaps there was not the light of any new fire in those beguiling verses. If Noah Webster had put the thoughts shrined in them into the sturdy prose with which he told about the "Farmer and the Boy Who Stole His Apples," they would have proved blank shots. The wording and the method made the brilliancy and the barb. Consider for a moment what would have become of Chaucer's daintiest tales if a Noah Webster had dealt them out with his economy of phrase; or, who would watch for the stars shooting athwart Heaven if they carried in their trail only the dull tints of meteoric iron?

It was counted not a little remarkable by boys in other colleges—that a professor on the banks of the Charles, who could, and did, talk learnedly about Italian grammar, should yet stoop to the brilliant tracery (in verse) of the *Footsteps of the Angels*, and splice out his *Hyperion* with rollicking songs about the "Leathery Herr Papa"—while we were following up our great officials in "Day on the Will," or a pretty problem in Algebra! What wonder if there should come about a literary florescence in the neighborhood of the Washington Elm,



From a photograph, copyright, 1870, by Sarony & Co

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow





## THE CRAIGIE HOUSE

at Cambridge, which did not make gay the soberer lands and Division-rooms to the southward?

In all these years of his earlier Harvard professorship, Longfellow is full of his Academic and literary industries—keeping his enthusiastic students abreast of him in the march over educational courses and busy with romance and poem—so busy and so worn that he is compelled to take a run, in 1842, to the baths of Marienburg, in Germany. From this trip he brings back that high-flying marker of the *Belfry of Bruges*, also the so-called “Slavery Poems,” and sundry notes forecasting his Trilogy of *Christus*.

In 1843 he married the daughter of an esteemed and wealthy merchant of Boston. Thenceforward the Craigie House, with its Washington memories and its outlying green fields, stretching to the Charles River, became the poet’s permanent home—notable for its tasteful equipments and for those gracious hospitalities which for so many years made all its doors and windows beam with summery welcomes. There were those who thought they saw in the new and dignified mistress of this home a likeness to the shadowy, elusive, graceful figure of that “Mary Ashburton,” which

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

had flitted coyly over some of the tenderer pages of *Hyperion*—perhaps their suspicions may have been well grounded.

### LATER WORK AND YEARS

THERE comes another swift trip to Europe for this poet, on whom Fortune would seem to have showered its favors. Lesser poems, such as the "Village Blacksmith," or the "Skeleton in Armor," make their winning assonance heard from time to time; and in 1847 comes the larger music of *Evangeline*, in which he sweeps on broad cæsural, hexameter pinions, from the fir-fretted valleys of Acadia to the lazy, languorous tides which surge silently through the bayous of Louisiana.

There was an outcry at first—that this poem showed classic affectation; but the beauty and the pathos carried the heroine and the metre into all hearts and homes in all English-speaking lands. The *Hiawatha* came later, but not by many years; and this again called out the shrill salute of a good many of those critics who "shy" at any divergence from the conventionalities by which their schools are governed, and who took captious exceptions to a metre that was strange; but the laughing waters of

## LONGFELLOW

Minnehaha and the pretty legendary texture of this Indian poem have carried its galloping trochaic measure into all cultivated American households. *Hiawatha* did not appear, however (1855), until its author had given over his labors as a teacher, and was resting upon the laurels which had grown all round that Cambridge home. The pretty tale of *Kavanagh*, of earlier date, ranked fairly with his other ventures in the field of prose fiction—all of them wearing the air of poems gone astray—bereft of their rhythmic robes, and showing a lack of the brawn and virility which we ordinarily associate with the homely trousers of prose.

After his retirement from the Chair of Modern Languages (to which Lowell had been named successor, 1855), under the ceaseless labors of which Longfellow had grown restive, he could give more time and an unburdened conscience to his Christian *Trilogy* and to his dealings with Dante. There was occasional high disport, too—as of a boy loose from school—in such playful fancies as that of Miles Standish and his courtship, and that later engarlanding of tales which he wove together about the old Sudbury Inn. It was a delightful leap away from things academic, and admitted of that frolic—of wintry flame—of love

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

notes, and of legendary magic, which put this bundle of enkindling stories to the illumination of many a fireside circle. They may indeed, and will—always, I think—call to mind certain other *Canterbury Tales*—which is a pity! The thrush may and does sing delightfully; but if the memory of the joyous, rollicking roundelay of the Bob-o'-Lincoln obtrudes between the notes—'t is bad for the thrush. As for the *Opera magna*—as he counted them, it is not needful to speak: the *Christus*, with its Golden Legend, will always be valued for its scholarly ranges and for its pleasantly recurring poetic savors. It hardly seems up to the full score of his purpose or of his ambitions; monkish ways are laid down tenderly, as they wended through mediæval wastes; and so are Christ-ways of later and lightsomer times: but there is no careering blast of Divine wind sweeping through the highways all, and clearing them of putrescent dusts.

For kindred reasons I cannot share in many of the higher estimates which have been placed upon the poet's Dantean labors. Scholarship, loving care, and conscientious study are lavished in abundance; lingual graces are not lacking; nor technical power to match measure for measure. But back of all there seems to be

The Fifth Psalm.

A Midwinter Mass. — for the Dying Year

Yes, the Year is growing old.

I.

And his eye is pale and blear'd,  
Deaf, with frosty hands and cold.

Plucks the old man by the beard,

Sorely sorely!

Send Proof to  
Henry W. Longfellow.  
Cambridge

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

large want of effective kinship, in this kindly, serene, studious—yet joyous New Englander—with that intense, soldierly, deep-thoughted Italian—whose Beatrice was a rich, swift dream of his youth, and Florence, the fair city, with its hopes and splendors, a dream of all his years. It was not for the graceful scholar and the meditative master of Cambridge life to march with a tread that should echo afar, and with a clang of armor that might shake the walls of Erebus, into the shades where dwell the Blessed and the Damned. Not for him to court those solemn meetings with the august dead, or with the great criminals seething in the gulf of torments and telling of their woes and wickedness. In short, Dante was quite other than Longfellow—so largely other, and different, that the delicate verse of the latter seems to me to glide over the passionate, divinely wrought lines of the Italian, as a skater glides over ice—nowhere cutting to the depths—nowhere breaking through the rhetorical crust, under which the floods riot and writhe.

But why make ungracious comparisons? The maker of an *Inferno* is maker of an epoch; and this Cambridge poet of ours who tells deft stories of the old Sudbury Inn, and

## LONGFELLOW

measures in beguiling and unmatched strain the blessings of "Resignation," and who, arm-in-arm with an idealized Evangeline, traverses the land from end to end, has thereby lifted the weight of sorrow from so many grieving ones, and put such a lifting and consoling joyousness into the spirits of so many thousands, that we call down benisons on him and revere his memory.

It was a placid and serene life that the poet lived; he had the love and respect of pupils whenever and wherever he taught; his friends were multiplied year by year; only once—in Poe's uncanny day, did he suffer from the stabs of ungracious criticism; the toils of poverty or the harrowing constraints of narrowed means never wrapt him in; always that wide, generous home was his own—always open to hospitality that kindled in him new vigor. Only once a grief burst upon him which was without its nepenthe; 't was when the benign womanly presence which had blessed his heart and his household was swept away, before his very eyes, and his unavailing struggles—in a cloud of fire and smoke—into darkness!

A world of readers, far and near, shared in that grief. And when the labors, whose pur-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

suit mitigated and assuaged the great sorrow, were done, and he, too, passed away, there were thousands, both in America and in England, who felt, with a sinking of the heart, that a good friend and a melodious singer had gone.

### ANOTHER NEW ENGLANDER

ANOTHER, yet of a different strain and mould, was that poet<sup>1</sup> of *Maude Muller* and many other unforgettable stories, who was born in that angle of Massachusetts where the Merrimac, weary of its toil among spindles, finds its way, near the old town of Newburyport, into the sea. The farm to whose lands and labors he was heir, lay in the town of Haverhill, along a pretty stream which was tributary to the Merrimac, and which he has photographed in lines that can never lose color :

“Woodsy and wild and lonesome  
The swift stream wound away,  
Through birches and scarlet maples,  
Flashing in foam and spray.”

<sup>1</sup> John G. Whittier, b. 1807; d. 1894. *Legends of New England* (first book), 1831; *Songs of Labor*, 1850; *Snow Bound*, 1866; *Complete Works*, 1888; *Life*, by Underwood, and fuller biography by S. T. Pickard, 2 vols., 1894.



## WHITTIER

From the hills which he knew in his childhood he could see in fair weather Agamenticus and Monadnock to the north, and on the east the glimmer of the ocean, from Salisbury beach to the rocks of Cape Anne.

Whittier as a lad was tall, but not over-strong, with large eyes, deep set in their orbits and full of expression. Those eyes never ceased to challenge attention, and could of themselves question one or make reply. His boyish experiences taught him of all farm labors; he could milk the cows, or fell trees, or cradle grain. His school opportunities were small, but he grappled them with a rare persistence. The strong Quaker strain of blood in him brought with it a love for straightforwardness, for plainness and simplicity of speech and conduct, which he never outgrew; but—what was more rarely a product of Quakerism—there was born in him an instinct for rhyme and poetic illuminations of thought, which broke out of him as easily as the dapples of sun and shadow broke upon the Powow River. He was humane, too; Burns's field-mouse touched him as tenderly as the Scotsman's rhythm; all suffering things and all captives made quick appeal to him, and he wreaked their woes in lines that always car-

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ried flavors of New England woods and waters.

Some of these lines catch the attention of Garrison, the arch agitator, only two or three years his senior, who goes to visit him among his cows—and gives to him the earliest of those encouragements which pave the way to an ardent and life-long friendship. The Quaker farm-boy—earnest to multiply all helps for a better schooling—has also his shoe-making experience; in which the measured beat upon the lap-stone is balanced and lightened by a beat of trochaic measures and song. There is apprenticeship, moreover, to the printing craft; but the “composing-stick” in his hand always lags behind the composing-stick in his thought. His work is known and welcomed in all the local journals; it has wandered even as far as Hartford, where that wit, George D. Prentice—in those days managing the *New England Review*—has pounced upon the Quaker poet as a good successor to himself, when he files away to enter upon his Kentucky career.

In 1830-31, therefore, Whittier is virtual editor of that Hartford weekly; and I can recall distinctly how, in those years (when the present writer was a fledgling-pupil at a country school fifteen miles away from the tidy

## WHITTIER

Connecticut capital) there was a close fingering of the goods—journals, raisins, and candies—which an itinerant huckster brought every Saturday afternoon into the school-yard—for a possible story or poem by “J. G. W.!” A year or two later we find Whittier returned to his old home, shouldering up the industrial exigencies of the farm—his father being dead—but still illuminating the newspaper columns with the bright outcome of his wakeful muse.

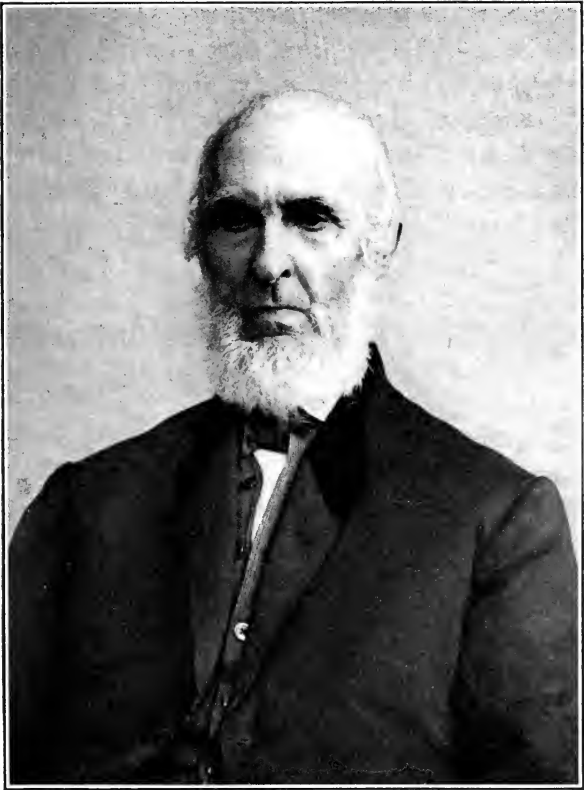
He has also a quasi entry upon politics; is twice a member of the Massachusetts Legislature; is stimulated to vigorous political plotting; has large faith in his lobbying capacity; is even talked of as possible member of Congress. He is for some time *lié* with that acute politician Caleb Cushing, then recently returned from European voyaging, and who not much later gave to the Knickerbocker readers his *Notes from the Netherlands*; but the lines of political travel for these two Essex men soon diverged largely; and for the Cushing of John Tyler's and Buchanan's day, it is certain that Whittier could have broken into no pæans of applause.

After 1836 he betakes himself to a village home in Amesbury (the ancestral farm being sold), and there—not so far away as to forbid

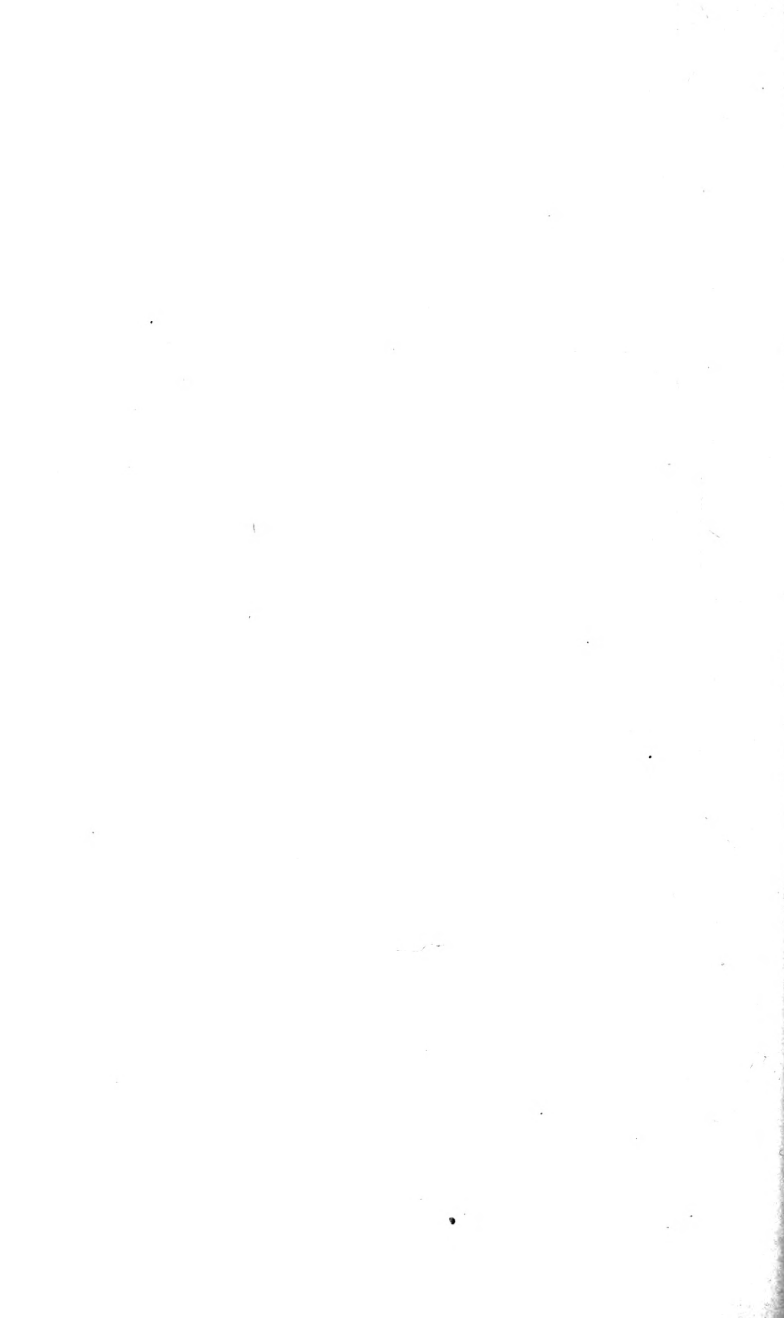
## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

companionship with the hills and brooks which had made rejoicings for his boyhood—he kept and guarded his kindly bachelor serenity in a home which was brightened for many and many a year by the feminine graces and the unconquerable cheer and courage of his younger sister. There is all the while more or less of working connection with this or that local journal, which represented his “Henry Clay” and his “Industrial” proclivities, and which could show hospitality to the strong anti-slavery note of much of his better verses—by reason of their poetic graces. He even comes to the distinction of being mobbed in those turbulent times, when George Thompson, the English anti-slavery expositor, came over to instruct New Englanders in their social and moral duties. But Whittier was never a man to shrink from any hazards or any indignities to which he might be exposed by firm and full utterances of his humane and kindly instincts, and of his sympathy with captives everywhere. From notoriety of a vulgar sort he always shrunk; but from that which was due to annoyance, however ignoble, incurred for conscience sake, he never shrunk.

In the memorable days belonging to the period of the fugitive slave-law decision, and the



John Greenleaf Whittier



Good pity than both <sup>of</sup> pity as <sup>old</sup>  
 Who using the dream of life as seed  
 From all sad words of tongue or pen  
 The bud-due here there: "it may be here!"  
 Ah well! for us all some sweet life is  
 Deeply buried from human eyes,  
 And in the hereafter angels may  
 Roll the stone from its grave away!

John Keats

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS,

trend of fiery Northerners over the borders of Kansas, he broke indeed into peals of Hebraic wrath, which sometimes outburned the rhetorical blaze of his poetic measure of song. If he were to write again, under the lights which have opened upon him Beyond, I think he would modify, in some degree, the excoriating mention of Webster in his fiery poem of "Ichabod"—

"Then, pay the reverence of old days  
To his dead fame;  
Walk backward, with averted gaze,  
And hide the shame."

Else, there would be a cold meeting for those two—twinned by traceable lines of Puritan blood, and twinned by the deep-set darkling eyes—in those courts of Futurity, where the poet believed all who had ever wrought well in any lines of life would surely meet.

Critics—knowing in those small matters—say that his verse has technical flaws of rhyme and measure; 't is very likely, too, that his classical allusions come on the wing of Plutarch; but his Nor-Easterns are just as real, though they do not carry the pretty Greek clatter of

"Euroclydon—the storm-wind."



## WHITTIER

But we must leave this New England master of the deep-set eyes; and in leaving I make a threefold summing up of the big virtues that belonged to this man and to his work: First—his humanities; always ready to lift that clear honest voice of his to the chorus where there was chanting in furtherance of humane enterprise, or in honor of humane workers—whether living or dead—and always generous to the full limit of his means; always ready with a sharp note of distrust against organized schemes for the aggrandizement of wealth—against wealth itself even, except it came only to flow out again in beneficent streams of well-doing, and kindly helpfulness. Again, there belonged to this singer, broad and earnest religious thought; clear, simple, and sufficient, with no crevices where the acrid juices of sectarianism could put in their work. The great vital truths are set firmly in his jewelled verse, while the lesser ones, about which doctors and presbyters everlastingly wrangle, drift down the wind—even as chaff scuds away where grain is winnowed.

Yet another virtue in our poet is his unblinking New Englandism. Burns was never more undisguisedly Scottish, than this man was equipped with all the sights and sounds, and

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

loves and hopes, which clustered "thither and yon" along the pretty valley of the Merrimac. Snows have their white memorial in little heaps filtered through crevices by door or window; the horns of the baited cattle clash against the stanchions in the barn; and with every spring-tide the arbutus and the hepatica blush through the mat of last year's leaves.

"Inland, as far as the eye can go,  
The hills curve round like a bended bow;  
A silver arrow from out them sprung,  
I see the shine of the Quasycung;  
And round and round, over valley and hill,  
Old roads winding, as old roads will,  
Here to a ferry, and there to a mill;  
And glimpses of chimneys and gabled eaves,  
Through green elm arches and maple leaves—  
Old homesteads sacred to all that can  
Gladden or sadden the heart of man."

Whittier wrote very much; but there are touches of his that will survive as long as New England blood and pride survive.

### A HALF-KNOWN AUTHOR

I CALL this writer, of whom we are now to speak—and who also had the blood of middle New England brimming in him—half-known,

## SYLVESTER JUDD

because his death came about when his work was half done,<sup>1</sup> and because the book by which he is best known, does by reason of its redundancies and lack of bookmaking craft, only half reveal the excellencies of the man.

Though he was younger by a half dozen years than Whittier, yet he had finished all his preachments in his little church at Augusta, Me., and had rounded out his tale of books long before the Amesbury poet had wrapped his memory in the glittering covers of *Snow Bound*.

Sylvester Judd was bred in the extreme sanctities and rigidities of Calvinism at Westhampton—almost within sight of that church of a neighbor town from which Jonathan Edwards had been dislodged—had been educated at Yale (1836) where his diary shows uneasy Edwardsian self-examinations—had gone through the whole gamut of religious doubts and ecstasies—had studied “Divinity” at Harvard, and in the easy fit of a spick and span Unitarian jacket of belief, and full of an exuberant, a self-denying, and a hopeful piety, he is planted (1840) over a flock in Maine.

<sup>1</sup> Sylvester Judd, b. 1813; d. 1853. *Margaret, A Tale of the Real and the Ideal*, 1845; *Life and Character of Sylvester Judd*, by Miss Arethusa Hall, Boston, 1854.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

He was of delicate make, with delicate tastes, having high reputation for scholarship; giving his conscience large range, and his heart, too (very likely the criticsasters would, and did, sneer at him as one wearing his heart upon his sleeve); frail, as I said, physically; but mentally and morally large; with sensibilities all open, like an Æolian harp to the wind; but true to those eternal verities by which great currents of thought hold their courses. In the pulpit not trusting himself without notes; but sometimes breaking away in the heat of his exaltation into a warmth which was like the fires in the bush Moses saw. Oftener, however, over-humble—stealing his way quietly to the desk as if he wished none to see him; opening his talk, as if he wished none to hear him. Gentle, scholarly, shrinking—as unlike as possible to those Boanerges who thunder and wait for the echoes. Reading, as if what he read were the thing alone deserving of attention; and so putting a magnetic current into the reading that electrified and possessed one with a sense of a far-away Power-House, from which life-giving currents flowed.

This was the man who wrote *Margaret*, about which book I wish to say one word before closing this chapter of talk. Darley, the

## MARGARET

artist, did some outline illustrations for the tale of *Margaret*, which are admirable, and known to many not familiar with the story.

The book has its circumlocutions. Words are oft-times piled in heaps; some we do not know—perhaps a scholarly theft from Chaucer, or from Lydgate; perhaps a bit of smart provincialism—unfamiliar but racy—smacking of the real—a quaver of stirring life in them all. So full of wordy instincts that he tries—with too manifest a quest—to catch all the sounds of all the birds, and of all his four-footed friends of the woods, in his Onomatopoeic nets: too much of this, perhaps; and throughout, too much of the clangor of an ambitious vocabulary. There are curious down-East characters—driving oxen with quaint objurgatory phrase, or with knotted goad—putting in their “gees” and “haws” with unctuous nasality; trousers and boots, and all nether accoutrements, scenting through and through of the barn-yard.

Again, there is a curious old “Master,” of teaching arts—perhaps least real of all—a needed lay-figure on which the author hangs the tags of exploited faiths and exploded doctrines, which he wants to present in parenthesis; yet the figure fills quaintly and ingeniously

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

certain gaps which the motherhood and sisterhood of the narrative could not bridge across.

I said there were redundancies; perhaps one may count such the minute and faithful "repeats" of vulgar domestic broils which have sway in so many isolated households. These come "to the fore" in his many unshrinking ganglions of descriptive talk, with all the imbruted obstinacies and the yieldings—that are not yieldings—keeping up their welter, while bursts of fatherly and filial feeling here and there break through in regaling rifts of sunshine.

But more regaling than all is the rarely absent figure of Margaret, penetrated with an illuminating, inborn Christ-love, that opens march for her, and sets her tripping—through whatever clouds—to the glad light, which this man of conscience keeps always before him.

That pleasing presence, with its brightness and graces and pretty allurements, is throughout—as he meant it should be—a redeeming feature. The charm opens in the child's ingenuousness; it keeps its hold through dawning youthhood; it honors and dignifies the woman; and from the simple lustre of the central figure the tag-rags of special theologic doctrine drift away, as she goes on her airy-fairy

## MARGARET

march in the cleanness of the Christ-love—which is her sufficient adornment.

It was a large attempt this writer made—to show through all the interstices of family bickerings and family loves and jealousies, the clear shining of an unconscious innocence; and though he may have failed of full accomplishment, he has done so much and so well—with such piquant touches of real life—such dainty reproduction of Nature's own lavish florescence and her brooding shadows of the pine woods—that his name will long be cherished in the lettered annals of New England.

## CHAPTER VI

OUR last grouping of the characters in this lettered story brought into presence—first, that keen, shrewd man of the woods and of books, who, with a joining of Scotch, Norman, and Puritan blood in his veins, made up a rare composite New Englander; loving the sleepy meadows of the slow Assabet, and loving the weird stretch of those ribs of sand which brace Cape Cod against the seas; loving books, too, and unfettered ranges of thought; and by reason of his early death gathered (before his proper date) into the same group with those Concord men who knew him in their homes and saw him die.

Then came into view that gracious poet and favored son of fortune, who began an active career with teaching Italian idioms and paradigms to Bowdoin students, and endowed it with such *Psalms of Life* as all the world lis-



## SOME POETS

tened to, and kept in their hearts. After this, came from the same pen scholarly echoes, in unexceptionable and daintiest English, of the marvellous and untranslatable *Inferno* of Dante.

Next we had glimpse of that poet-philanthropist and humanitarian who punctuated his kindly speech with Quaker *Thees* and *Thous*, and his poems all, with delightful rhythmic graces; never a student in great schools—save that of nature; and with a fund of ardent Americanism in him that was never diluted by European travel. That little way-side Romaunt of Maud Muller would keep him always in mind if he had never written verse with far riper beauties.

Last came that quiet, blue-eyed, almost boyish, preacher, who put sermons into his story of *Margaret* which kindle the attention of listeners yet.

## POET AND PROFESSOR

THERE lies before me as I write, a little volume of a hundred and sixty-two pages, bound in green muslin, with stamped figures of a flamboyant vine and flowers upon it—the binding sadly broken, and pages thumb-worn—with a

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

paper label on the back bearing the legend "Holmes's Poems."<sup>1</sup> It was the first edition and bears the date of 1836; while upon the tat-

*And if I should live to be  
The last leaf upon the tree  
In the Spring.  
Let them smile as I do now  
At the old forsaken bough  
Where I cling.*

*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

*1831.*

*1890.*

*Facsimile of Dr. Holmes's handwriting*

tered fly-leaf just within the cover is the copy of a verse in the handwriting of the master, from one of his most cherished poems:

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Wendell Holmes, b. 1809; d. 1894. *Poems* (first issue), 1836, Otis, Broaders & Co., Boston. *As-træa* Φ. B. K. poem, 1850. *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, 1858; *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table*, 1860; *Elsie Venner*, 1861; *The Guardian Angel*, 1867; *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table*, 1872; R. W. Emerson, 1885; *Over the Tea-cups*, 1891.

## DOCTOR HOLMES

“And if I should live to be  
The last leaf upon the tree  
In the spring,  
Let them smile as I do now  
At the old forsaken bough  
Where I cling.”

1831 OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. 1890.

For fifty-three years that thumb-worn volume had been upon my shelves, and in sending it (1890) to the author for consecration at his hands, I ventured to tell him (with the same hardihood with which others are now told) that the book had been bought in early college days (1837), and had been read over and over with great glee and liking—that twenty-three years later it had been read to children at Edgewood, who had shown a kindred glee and liking—and that again, thirty years later, the same favorite work had been read to grandchildren of the house, who had listened with the same old love and relish.

Whereupon the genial master of verse returned the book, with the authentication of his kindly hand upon it, and one of the charming notelets which slipped so easily from his pen. I venture to excerpt a line or two—

“ . . . *Laudare a laudato* is always pleasing, and this request of yours is the most delicate piece of

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

flattery—if I may use the word in its innocent sense—that I have received for a long while.”

Our good friend, Dr. Holmes (and all the reading world has a right to speak of him thus), was the son of an old style Connecticut clergyman, who had been bred among the rough pastures of Windham County, and had been educated at Yale, but was afterward translated to Cambridge, where he had a church, and a gambrel-roofed house—now gone—but perpetuated by such particular and tender mention on the part of the distinguished son, who was born under its shelter, that we have planted a good picture of it on these pages. This son when he printed his first book of poems was twenty-seven; he had graduated at Harvard with excellent scholarly stand in the class of '29—the same year on which that sturdy Federalist,<sup>1</sup> Josiah Quincy, succeeded to

<sup>1</sup> He strongly opposed the war with England (1812) and the purchase of Louisiana—declaring that his fellow Congressmen had “no authority to throw the rights and liberties and property of this people into hotch-pot with the wild men on the Missouri, or with the mixed, though more respectable, race of Anglo-Hispano-Gallo-Americans who bask on the sands in the mouth of the Mississippi.” This sounds very much like recent (1899) utterances from the mouths of Massachusetts anti-Imperialists.

## HOLMES IN EUROPE

President Kirkland, and gave a sagacious government to the college—as he had already given good municipal order, and a good Market-house to Boston. This many-sided President was also author of a history of the College; and we excerpt from it a grand exhibit of the procession which belonged to festal Commencement days in those old times—when our pleasant Dr. Holmes was a young marcher there; and a pensman as well—illustrating the pages of the students' *Collegian* with such rollicking fun as you will find in the "Spectre Pig" or in "the Tailor"—who prettily buttoned his jacket "with the stars."

For a year or two after graduation Dr. Holmes had wavered between law and medicine, and deciding for the latter, had gone via New York (where he saw Fanny Kemble—"a very fine affair, I assure you"<sup>1</sup>) to study in Paris; and there are vivid little pictures in his letters—of Dupuytren, Velpeau, and Ricord, who were then prominent at the Hotel Dieu and La Charité; and still other vivid outlines of what was seen on a quick run through Holland and the Scottish country.

But that Connecticut-born minister, who had married for his first wife a daughter of

<sup>1</sup> Letter of March 30, 1833; Morse's *Life*, vol. i., p. 83.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

the redoubtable President Stiles (of Yale), and for his second wife that excellent lady of the Wendell family, who gave to the poet his name and his large mother-wit, was not greatly endowed with worldly goods; and there were serious questionings if the enthusiastic student could extend his voyaging into Southern Europe—as he greatly desired; at last, however, self-denials at home made the journey possible for the eager young New Englander—earnest to do what “the other fellows did;” and a quick succeeding trip to Italy made markings upon his mental camera which never left the young man’s mind. “They talk about Henry VII. Chapel of Westminster,” he says in a letter of 1835; “’t would make a very pretty pigeon-house for Milan Cathedral.” Such comparisons, which carry a tale in them, run through all those early letters.

In the spring of 1838 he is at home—a doctor—with “his sign” out; quick, keen, observant; perhaps too boy-like in aspect to impress elderly people, and loving a “horse and chaise” then—and always—better than a sick-room. In 1838 he was made Professor at Dartmouth; had gained praise for medical essays; and at that time or thereabout had written upon the contagious character of puerperal fever, in a

## HIS POEMS

way that gave him permanent and distinguished place among the doctors who put brains into their work. In 1840 he married; and some six or seven years later came to his appointment as Professor of Anatomy in Harvard University, which he held continuously for thirty-five years.

It was a pit, in which he used to lecture at the old medical school in North Grove Street, and where he came to his tasks—like a veteran, so far as anatomical knowledge and precision of statement went; but like a boy, so far as play of witty allusion and comparison went; never did a man of science so halve his honors between what was due to knowledge and what was due to coruscating wit. A sight of him with his forceps over a cadaver made one forget his poems; and a reading of his poems, such as the *Nautilus*, or the *Last Leaf*, made one straightway forget—as they do now—all dead things.

### AS AUTOCRAT

IF that “seventy-year clock” set a going by the “Angel of Life”—about which our Doctor-Poet speaks with engaging piquancy in the eighth chapter of his first prose book—had been silenced at forty-five, the world in general

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

would have known little of the reach and buoyancy of his mind; and the biographers might have dismissed him with mention like this: "Died in 1858, Dr. Holmes, a physician of fair practice, who lectured on anatomy and wrote clever poems."

In the winter of 1831-32 there had appeared in that old *New England Magazine*—in which, as we have seen, Willis, Whittier, and others had their occasional "innings"—a paper from Dr. Holmes, under title of "Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table;" but this was unripe fruit; and it was not until the establishment of the *Atlantic*, a quarter of a century later, that the same author—then at the mellow age of forty-eight—did, under the kindly urgency of Editor Lowell, undertake that new series of the "Autocrat" which made his fame and gave delight to thousands.

Yet there is scarce a page in the book as it finally appeared but would have somewhere started the sour disapproval of the conventional teachers of rhetoric and literature; indeed it would be hard to name any book which shows the rifts of new lightning in it that would satisfy the professors of "good writing." There is no method in the Autocrat; hardly has he nosed his way into an easily apprehended con-



## RELIGION OF HOLMES

secutive line of talk, than he breaks away—like a shrewd old hound who is tired of the yelping “pack”—upon some new keen scent of his own. The foxy savors of a harsh Calvinism—which he had known in young days—whenever they drifted athwart his memory, always put him into such lively objurgations as would have brought a smart rap on the knuckles from his Orthodox father.

A great many such raps came to him from other quarters, which he took smilingly; but never so seriously as to forbid his giving a new thwack when occasion came. It was objected by many that the Doctor never gave a full *credo* of his own, while picking flaws in so many.<sup>1</sup> The simple opening of the *Pater Noster*—“Our Father”—had very large religious significance for him; but it is doubtful if the worshipful utterance of this Shibboleth of Trust ever carried with it that suffusion of awe and mystery which wrapped around the minds of Emersonians. He was not an inapt church-goer; rather loved a resting of his head against the bobbins of a high, old-fashioned pew, whence he might follow the discourse, as

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the nearest approach may be found in a letter to Mrs. Stowe (without date) in the second volume of Morse's *Biography*, pp. 248-49.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

a sharp kingbird—to make use of his own delightful simile—tracks the flight of a stately and ponderous crow; dipping at him when angles of flight served—plucking now and then a feather—and if arriving at the same goal, marking his skyey way with a great many interjected bits of black plumage.

Dr. Holmes had not the stuff in him to make an anchorite of, or yet a saintly monk. He was too *vif* and incompressible; far apter to take in evidence that came by the way of the probe and the forceps, than that other sort that comes by soul-right, or birth-right, or Wordsworthian memories—

“Trailing clouds of glory!”

But, if whimsically critical, and odd-whiles brandishing his scalpel in threatening gladiatorial style, 't is certain that in all essentials he was at one with broad-minded Christian teachers everywhere; nor do I find it easy to forecast any worthy vision of a “Celestial country” where the alert little Doctor and his good Calvinistic father should not be joined again—hand and heart.

The Autocrat was followed in succeeding years—by the Professor, and again the Poet—

## THE AUTOCRAT

at the well-used Breakfast-Table. But the delightful inconsequence of the Autocrat's talk did not admit of duplication. There are gems scattered up and down throughout the series; all will be cherished while inspiriting books are thought worth reading; but this will not forbid our saying that the first are best.

There are woods which in the burning give out balsamic scents—regaling, stimulative; and there are books which, in the reading, give out the aromas of the fine spirit which went to the kindling of the text—the spirit that flows out and in—transfusing the type—illuminating the crevices—past all offices of the “black and white” illustrators. And it is this buoyant, rollicking, witty Ariel of a spirit, that we recognize and love, all up and down the pages of the Autocrat.

We cannot lay our finger on the special phrase which informs us—beyond all informing processes of other masters; we cannot dissect and lay bare the nerve-centres, which set the mass a-throb; but none the less we know they are there.

If I were challenged to name the arch quality in this brilliant entertainer, I should be tempted to put his New England *gumption* (as the natives call it) at the very top. He can

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

indeed be eloquent—this witty Doctor—and bring all the rhythmic “beats and pauses” of the schools into play; he can do fine writing—with the finest; but he ventures on such indulgence, as if half-ashamed, and straightway lays some stroke of high, mastering common-sense athwart the page which quite belittles, and subordinates all the school-craft and pen-craft.

Still later came Biographies from the hand of this subtle observer, well-gauged and told—conventionally; but he was largest when he broke literary rules—not when he followed them. Motley, of whose life he made a short story, he knew well; and so could lay his own heart to his, and weigh the hazards and triumphs of his life with a quickening zest that made one partner in the joys and honors; but with Emerson (as I have already said <sup>1</sup>) it was not the same. The facets of these two minds caught the sun at different angles; nor was there ever that easy, long-continued, confidential interchange of thoughts and hopes (as in the case of Motley) which paved the way for a beguiling flow of biographic story. All the crammings and the “readings up” in the world will not supply the place of this.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter IV., present volume.

## THE AUTOCRAT

From all this, however (though not without its charm), and from the later dishing of the delicate Tea-cups, we hie away to that first budget of the Autocrat's talk, with glee and an appetite that does not pall. There, the Doctor is always delightfully himself; conscientious, watchful, chirrupy; with an opinion always ready, *pro* or *con*; but not ready or apt to magnify or exalt that opinion by *resolutions*, or the clap-trap of a big meeting and of bass drums; keen at a wallop of the pillule methods of the homœopaths; and readier yet (if he had encountered them) at a crack of his resounding lash around the flanks and ears of—so-called—Christian Scientists; tender, too, odd-whiles—as where he takes the hand of the pretty School-Mistress in his own, and sets off with her down the “long path.”

'T is not yet, I think, fully appreciated; but this book of the Autocrat, it seems to me, will go with Montaigne, with the essays of Goldsmith, with Lamb's *Elia*, upon one of the low shelves where 't will always be within reach, and always help to give joy in the reading; and if the prose passages do not suffice, there remains that poem of the Nautilus (to which my book opens of itself); how beautiful, and how charmingly fresh it is!

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

"Thanks for the heavenly message brought by  
thee

Child of the wandering sea,  
Cast from her lap forlorn!  
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born  
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!  
While on my ear it rings,  
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a  
voice that sings:

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unrest-  
ing sea!"

## SOME OTHER DOCTORS

AMONG those good Christian teachers—who though no more believers than the poet in the literal "lake of fire and brimstone," had creptations of doubt about the influences of the anti-Calvinistic onslaughts of the Professor, as possibly supplanting serene inheritance of belief with sceptical unrest—was that kindly

## PRESIDENT WOOLSEY

President of Yale<sup>1</sup> who in 1871 succeeded to the place of President Woolsey.<sup>2</sup>

This latter, a nephew of the elder President Dwight, was a keen, sympathetic scholar; not a mere verbalist, but loving Greek because Electra, and the woes of Alcestis, and a thousand charms lived in its music; withal, carrying a stern Hebraic zeal into defence of old-fashioned family integrities and purities—as opposed to the gangrene of easy divorce; joining, too, a shrewd Saxon sense to his large knowledge of international law in questions of state-craft. All this belonged to him; and so did captivating, scholarly courtesies; yet the writer can well remember how a bad accent or a blundering murder of the symphonies that grew out of a good Greek scansion of Euripides would upset his nerves, and almost (but never quite) goad him to anger.

President Porter was cooler and perhaps calmer; more often heated by metaphysic burnings than by any widowed woes of an Alcestis; yet a most lovable, kind-hearted man—

<sup>1</sup> Noah Porter, b. 1811; d. 1892. *The Human Intellect*, 1868; *Books and Readings*, 1870; *Elements of Moral Science*, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> Theodore Dwight Woolsey, b. 1801; d. 1889. *Alcestis*, 1834; *Political Science*, 1871.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

incapable of an untruth, whether he talked of good reading or of causalities; stanchly orthodox, and so a little inquisitive about the paces of those who travelled (theologically) in a broad road; but doing all his battles with a smile of kindness, and smiting the Reids or Stewarts—if need were—with blows muffled in charities. Not over-apt in delicate phrases—stronger in scholastics than in prettinesses, and reckoning the graces of an active conscience and of accuracy beyond all the graces of words.

We cannot pass the name of that good, patient, learned Dr. Freeman Clarke,<sup>1</sup> who had the large heart and the wise purpose to combine in his "Church of the Disciples" (1840) a good many of the best things in the service of a half dozen sects of believers. Whatever we may think of his *Ten Great Religions* (and we know of no book that would fill its place), we must thank him for the large charity which, by his exposition of what has been reckoned the idolatrous service of myriads of heathen, has brought them—or was eager to bring them—into kindly relations with the Infinite Power

<sup>1</sup> James Freeman Clarke, b. 1810; d. 1888. *Doctrine of Forgiveness of Sin*, 1852; *Ten Great Religions*, 1871-83.



## A JOURNALIST

symbolized by their idols. He was an earnest advocate of all worthy freedom, and of human brotherhood; I wish as much could be said of all accredited preachers.

Contemporary with these men I have named, were those brothers Reed of Pennsylvania—grandsons of General Joseph Reed<sup>1</sup> of Revolutionary annals—one of whom was honorably known in diplomatic position; the other by his loving and critical charge of the earliest American edition of Wordsworth; both held professorships in the University of Pennsylvania, and both kept bravely alive the best traditions of Philadelphia culture.

### HORACE GREELEY

IF Professor Henry Reed (unfortunately lost in the Arctic catastrophe of 1854) be a good type of the culture which comes of collegiate discipline and happy social adjuncts, Horace Greeley<sup>2</sup> may be counted an excellent one of

<sup>1</sup> President of second provincial congress, Adjutant General under Washington, and subject of certain ill-founded allegations (in earlier editions of Bancroft's *History*), which were successfully antagonized by William B. Reed, who was Minister to China (1857) and negotiated the treaty of 1858.

<sup>2</sup> Horace Greeley, b. 1811; d. 1872. *American Conflict*, 1864-66; *Recollections of a Busy Life*, 1868.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

that hardy and resolute training which belongs to what we call a "self-made" man. That flax-haired, smooth-faced boy, who founded the bright little *New Yorker* in 1834, and decoyed bright workers into his trail, and who ultimately founded the *New York Tribune* with a great galaxy of literary retainers—that boy, I say, who was sprung from Scotch-Irish forbears, and who knew all the good huckleberry patches and the haunts of partridges around the high-lands of his New Hampshire home, had a grievously hard time in his youth. Even district-school chances were narrow; home-funds were narrower. He chopped, he burned coal, he rode horse to plough; he battled with all storms, and carried that brave, smooth front of his at the head of the column, when the New Hampshire farming broke down and the sheriff had come, and the family was afoot for a new home by Lake Champlain. There, the status of the son was no better; nor better in further and more westerly wanderings.

There was nothing but work for him; crudest work at first; then, work at the trade of printer, which he had learned; multiplied foot-wanderings followed—which bring him at last (1831) to New York—with a round face,

## THE NEW YORKER

quick courage, complexion like a girl's, and five dollars in his pocket. After sundry experiences, good and bad, he had the pluck and the pennies to set up (1834) the *New Yorker*, a weekly journal—largely literary, but not afraid to declare its political and economic leanings.

Those who twirl over the early numbers of the *New Yorker* will find a strong—perhaps, over-ambitious, literary flavor, with pretty flashes of verse—maybe, from some such poetesses as Mrs. Whitman, and Mrs. Osgood, or other charmers. Park Benjamin,<sup>1</sup> too, puts in an appearance—sometimes as associate editor—showing somewhat of the impetuosity, vigor, and virulence which in those days commanded a listening.

This last-named writer was born of American parents in Demerara; had come hither early in life; had suffered cruel surgical treatment, which with natural disabilities left him, in manhood, stalwart in arms, chest, and head, but incurably crippled as to his nether limbs. Possibly he was unhinged by this ill make-up; certain it is, that with a capacity for the weaving of words into very engaging and resonant verse, he united great aptitude for wordy quar-

<sup>1</sup> Park Benjamin, b. 1809; d. 1864

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

rels and for vitriolic satire. He was a man of strong brain, possessed of tropical passionateness of utterance; but never accomplishing what his keen, active mind promised, and friends hoped for.

Greeley's affiliation with Benjamin was not, however, for very long; but he did draw into the journalistic ranks, later, such faithful workers as Raymond, Margaret Fuller, Charles Dana, Ripley, Curtis, and many another who has contributed—each in his or her way—to make of the old *Tribune* an efficient nurse of early American letters.

With all his aptitude for sharp political discussion, and a capacity, if need were, for noisy storms of temper and floods of Billingsgate, he had yet a nice sense of poetic beauties; loving them in his youth; loving them later; and always keenly sensitive to the dash and fervor of a good poem, or to a thrilling burst of music. Like most self-made men he was a little suspicious and jealous of the accomplishments that come of collegiate study or any organized costly paraphernalia; counting Latinity and Greek—with scholarly mastership of even the modern languages—as so much of millinery trapping, serving only as a pretty disguise for the essential under-truths, always ever so much

## CHAPPAQUA

better in their homely Saxon nakedness. He loved to extol the successes of those who had won place, without the drill of the cloisters, and without that wearing down and polish of rough mental edges and of egotism, which are apt to belong to those never whirled about in the hopper of a college, and never submitted to sturdy tussle with fellows as big as they, on Division Room benches.

He believed, though, in handicraft; and would have thrown his old white hat into the air could he have known of the establishment and popularity of our "Industrial Schools." An intelligent, helpful, and tender sympathy always bound him to those who worked and to those who were poor. His daughter, Mrs. Clendenin, with filial graciousness, gives picture of him—on a stormy night of winter—bringing "little homeless, ragged girls to shelter, and carrying their burdens for them."<sup>1</sup>

### THE CHAPPAQUA FARM

HE never overcame either, his old love for farming, and for its processes and products. Through all the intense belligerencies of his later political life he held and rejoiced in his

<sup>1</sup> *Ladies' Home Journal*, February, 1892.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

little farm, with its modest house and bouncing barn upon the hill-slopes of Chappaqua. It was within three (or at most four) years before the end of his career that I passed a day with him there; drawn thither by quick interest in his draining schemes, and farm experimentation. He gave most ready welcome to curiosity of that sort, and doffed all political professions and pretensions when the perfume of the Chappaqua woods beguiled him. He was in his best strength in those days; his complexion still like a girl's; his courtesies blunt, but not without a disguised heartiness; his admiration for his newly equipped barn was boisterous; his enthusiasm over a good "run" from his drainage tile, exuberant; his welcome of the sunshine, and of the notes of a bob-o'-link lilting over an alder-bush in the meadow was jubilant. 'T was a simple dinner we had at the homestead; his courtesies there all aimed to beat down memories of idle and non-essential conventionalities. This ceremony over, he advised me that after dinner he was used to take an hour or more of exercise with his axe, in the woods; "perhaps, as farmer [with a little mischief in his tone], I would join him;" and he pointed to a second axe which was at my service.

## GREELEY AS WOODSMAN

I am not sure, but have a grave suspicion that there was a large streak of humor in his proposal, and that he greatly misdoubted the practical handicraft of his guest. It chanced, however, that an axe was a favorite tool with me; and I think I never enjoyed a triumph more than that over my host, when we had come to the wood—not only on score of time, but in showing by my scarf, that even distribution of right and left-handed strokes—without which no workman-like stump can be assured. His pleasant face beamed with generous acknowledgment; he even doffed his white hat in recognition of work done in good wood-chopper style; while a certain respect for his city guest was at last apparent. This little incident is detailed only to make clearer the engaging simplicities belonging to the character of the great journalist.

Three years thereafter (the visit taking place in 1868) Mr. Greeley was nominated for the Presidency by those "liberal Republicans" who were disaffected with General Grant; and the Democratic party—by a sudden *volte-face*—endorsed the candidacy. This involved a disruption of old party alliances, and such a campaign of abusive and malignant personalities as overset all the tranquillities and patient

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

endurance of the author of the *American Conflict*. All the more was this turbid whirl of the political caldron disturbing and maddening, when the tide (which seemed at first setting *his way*) changed, and left him stranded with a hopeless minority of votes. He had worn himself down with eager, intense speech-making; he had fretted under unwelcome fellowships; he had wilted under appalling affliction in his own household; at last his brain was shaken. There was indeed one little brave, beautiful struggle to hold fast the shifting helm of the old *Tribune* ship; but it was vain; and in 1872—only four years after the pleasant encounter in the shady woods of Chappaqua—the beaming face, all drawn by mental inquietudes and the shivers of delirious frenzy, was hidden away in some *Maison de Santé* of the Westchester Hills, never to mend until death came with its healing calm, and gave to his countenance the old serenities.

### BRED IN THE PURPLE

So much like a Romance is the life and death of the next writer—and the last I bring to your present notice—that I am tempted to begin, as old stories begin:—"Once upon a



## EDGAR ALLAN POE

time," nearly a century ago, a gay young fellow, of good presence, hailing from Baltimore, who had run away from home, and had married a young actress of bewitching face and figure (albeit she was a widow), and was carrying out some theatre engagement with her in the Puritan city of Boston, gave word at the ticket office (January, 1809) that there would be an interruption in the performances; and presently thereafter, a baby-boy was born to the twain, who was called Edgar.<sup>1</sup>

The father's name was David, aged thirty; not a very good actor, but a zealous protector of his wife's claims, and threatening on one occasion to give a caning to Buckingham (of that *New England Magazine* where Whittier, Willis, and Hawthorne afterward wrought) for an adverse criticism of his pretty wife—who managed piquantly the parts of *Cordelia* and of *Ophelia*. As the baby grew, the mated

<sup>1</sup> Edgar A. Poe, b. 1809; d. 1849. *Tamerlane and other Poems*, 1827; *Tales of the Grotesque*, 1840; *The Raven*, 1845. *Biographies*: by Griswold, harsh in its judgments; Ingram, full, but over-defensive; Stoddard, wholly fair, not extended; Woodberry (in *American Men of Letters*), faithful, painstaking, cleverly done, but not altogether sympathetic. The late Professor Minto's sketch (*British Encyclopædia*), very misleading; and Lang's note in his piquant *Letters to Dead Authors*, has kindred misjudgments.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

parents slipped away for engagements in New York, Philadelphia, and Richmond.

The pretty mother died at the latter place in 1811, and the boy Edgar, then scarce two, was adopted by the young and childless wife of a Scottish, well-to-do tobacco merchant named Allan. With these new parents the boy was launched upon a life of luxury. He was bright, intelligent, apt; and before he was six, used to declaim, "play parts," and sing songs upon the "mahogany table," for the amusement of his foster-father's guests.

In 1815 the family sailed for Europe; and Edgar was put to school at Stoke Newington, under the lee of Stamford Hill, some three miles north of London Tower. It was a locality that would interest a quick lad. Defoe had written his story of *Robinson Crusoe* in a gaunt old building near by, and still standing; and Dr. Watts had trilled his "Infant Songs" in a fine park of the neighborhood and lay buried thereabout; but I don't think Edgar Poe was ever very tender upon Dr. Watts.

In the four or five years of that English school-life, the boy gets a smattering of French and Latin—has his rages at Murray's Grammar—plants in deep lines upon his thought, images of darkly shaded dells or of brawling

## SCHOOL-DAYS

rivers (to make sombre or stormy, pages of future stories); and when he sails for home (1820), his quick vision takes in pictures of boiling green seas, or of canvas straining from the topsail yards, that will all come to him (when he wants them) for the narrative of *Gordon Pym*, or the glassy whirl of a maelstrom.

Then—all the while lapped in purple—he has his school at Richmond again; wrestling gayly with Latin and Greek; a lithe swimmer in stretches of the James River; not large, but firmly knit, with broad, bold forehead and lustrous eyes; having his little Byronic episodes of love-making to women older than he; getting himself planted, later, at the University (which we have seen growing among the mountains under Jefferson's care); not so much a favorite there, as one admired; shy of intimacies, proud, using the Scotch Allan moneys overfreely; making debts "of honor," which Papa Allan will not pay; and so—a break; the proud boy (aged seventeen) going off—after a short year of college life—Boston-ward, to seek his fortune.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

### SOLDIER AND POET

HIS book of *Tamerlane* is printed in 1827. Shall we catch one little six-line verse from it, to show how the limner of the *Raven* pitched his first song?—

“We grew in age—and love—together—  
Roaming the forest and the wild,  
My breast her shield in wintry weather;  
And when the friendly sunshine smiles,  
And she would mark the opening skies,  
I saw no Heaven—but in her eyes.”

But from the poor, thin book (pp. 40), of which a late copy commanded \$1,800, no money came and no fame; he enlists in the army (1827) under the name of “E. F. Perry”—giving his age as two or three years greater than dates warrant; is Sergeant-Major at Fortress Monroe (1829); gets discharge through agency of friends, and by similar agency receives appointment as cadet at West Point; grows tired of this, and after a year is dismissed—by a court-martial which he has himself invited—his scholarly “rating” putting him third in French, and seventeenth in mathematics, in a class of eighty-seven.

He has twelve cents to his credit at leaving;

# TAMERLANE

AND

## OTHER POEMS.

---

BY A BOSTONIAN.

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Young heads are giddy, and young hearts are warm,  
And make mistakes for manhood to reform.—COWPER.



**BOSTON:**  
CALVIN F. S. THOMAS.....PRINTER.

.....

1827.

*Facsimile of the title-page of Poe's first book  
From the copy in the possession of Thomas J. McKee, Esq., of New York*

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

his pride intense, yet his mates make up a purse which gives him a start; and within the year (1831) there is a fresh, thin booklet<sup>1</sup> of poems, old and new—among them the first stirrings of the lyre of *Israfel*,

“Whose heart-strings are a lute,”

making echoes that are not yet dead.

But the cadets do not relish the little green-covered volume, nor do many others; so he wanders southward—wins a prize for his story of *MS. found in a Bottle*; encounters for the first time J. P. Kennedy, who is his stanch friend thereafter always; sometimes he is sunk in the depths of poverty, and sometimes regaling himself in such over-joyous ways as have sad and fateful reaction. Among the paternal relatives he falls in with at Baltimore is the widowed sister of his father—Mrs. Clemm, with her daughter of eleven (the archetype of his delightful flesh-and-blood story of *Eleonora*), who are thenceforth for many a year “all in all” to him. With that dark-haired girl in her earlier teens, the high-browed pale poet—with shrunken purse and pride at its highest—may have wandered time on time, over the pretty undulations of surface, where the trees of Druid Hill now cast their shadows. There

<sup>1</sup> Published by Elam Bliss, 1831, pp. 124.

## POE AT RICHMOND

may have been a yearning for the latitude of Richmond and for the luxuries of the big brick mansion of the Allans (corner of Main and Fifth Streets), where he had in his boy-days won plaudits for his oratory over the mahogany of his foster-father.

The hopes that centred there, however, were soon at an end; the kindly Mrs. Allan had died in 1829; in 1833 the master of the great house had married again; and the year following had gone from it to his grave—not without one last interview, when he had lifted his cane threateningly upon the discarded Edgar.

But the poet finds work in Richmond upon the *Southern Literary Messenger*; he has promise of ten dollars a week; and upon that promise—taking radiance from the poetic haloes of his genius—he determines to marry that sweet girl-cousin of his, Virginia Clemm—scarce fifteen as yet—and establish her, with her helpful mother, in a home of his own. There is opposition, strong and protracted; but it is over-borne by the impetuosity of the poet; and the strange wedding comes about (1836), the certificate of marriage declaring the bride—twenty-one!<sup>1</sup>

Whether by pre-natal influences or forces of

<sup>1</sup> *Husting's Court Records*, Richmond; cited by Mr. Woodberry, p. 98.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

education, the moral sense was never very strong in the poet; nor was there in him any harassing sense of the want of such a sense. He used a helpful untruth as freely and unrelentingly as a man—straying in bog-land—would put his foot upon a strong bit of ground which, for the time, held him above the mire.

But there is no permanent establishment in Richmond; there are differences with the kindly Mr. White of the *Messenger*; and presently a descent upon Egypt (New York), where the Harpers publish for the poet the narrative of *Gordon Pym*—full of all the horrors of piracy, of wreck, and of starvation. Mrs. Clemm had come with Poe on his migration, and eked out resources (which did not flow bountifully from *Gordon Pym*), by taking boarders—among them that stalwart, shock-headed, independent, much-knowing bookseller, William Gowans by name, who—one time in Centre Street and again in Fulton and Nassau—reigned despotically over great ranges of books, and loved to talk patronizingly and in well-measured commendation of the author of the *Raven*.



## POE IN NEW YORK

### PHILADELPHIA TO NEW YORK

BUT we cannot follow piece by piece and flame by flame the disorderly party-colored story of this child of misfortune—always finding admiration, and only pence when he looked for pounds; and only canny distrust where he looked—through filmy eyes—for welcome and heart's-ease. From New York he goes to Philadelphia, issuing there—on some new (perhaps extraneous) influence—a work on conchology; making a good many similar and fuller works contributory to his treatise for learners; reminding us in a degree of Goldsmith, when he wrote about *Animated Nature*. But if our poet of *Israfel* avails himself of the labors and print-work of scientists, he does it with a most shrewd and quick apprehension of their “parts;” and makes his own exhibit of old knowledges with the large understanding and keen discernment of a man who knows how to gather apt material and how to dispense it.

He has his “romantic” engagements, too, with the early magazinists of Philadelphia; with Graham (of whom Professor Smyth<sup>1</sup> tells us the eventful story)—with that rollick-

<sup>1</sup> *Philadelphia Magazine*, 1741-1850, 1892.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

ing comic actor, William Burton, who had his *Gentleman's Magazine*, and afterward (1848) his Chambers Street Theatre in New York, where he put multitudes into good humor with his *Micawber* and *Captain Cuttle*. There are literary relations in those days, more or less intimate, with Lowell—working at his *Pioneer*; and with Griswold, who is edging his way into the good graces of Mr. Graham. We note, too, the names of John Sartain (known for good work in art lines), and of Godey, and many another, in the record of Poe's literary schemings and life; we perceive that the interesting girl-wife is domiciled with the broad-browed poet in a little cottage over on Spring-Garden ways—of which Captain Mayne Reid tells us—and how the vines and roses overhung it and made of it a bower of beauty; and we learn furthermore, that in that Spring-Garden bower, over which the matronly and energetic Mrs. Clemm presided, there came suddenly a cruel upset of all force in the pretty girlish Virginia, who seemed bleeding away her life before the awe-struck husband. Thence came a shock to him, which he sought to mitigate—as his own plaintive record tells—by plunging into uncanny ways of self-forgetfulness.

It is easy to break asunder the ties holding

## THE RAVEN

him to this or that city. One would say, looking upon the long array of discarded literary partnerships, that it was easy for him to break all ties; yet he was never tired of the tie that bound him to the pretty child-wife and kinswoman who goes with him to a new home in New York, her frailties of health darkly shadowing him; and he shading her in all inapt ways, from the pitiless burnings and vexations of their narrowed means. Here again, as everywhere, poverty pierces him like a knife. But still his hopes are as jubilant and exaggerated as his despairs; most of all, when, after working under the kindly patronage of Willis upon the old New York *Evening Mirror*, there blazes upon the public eye, on a certain afternoon of January, 1845, that weird poem of the *Raven* (copied from advance sheets of the *American Whig Review* for February), and which drifted presently from end to end of the country upon a wave of Newspaper applause.

I remember well with what gusto and unction the poet-editor<sup>1</sup> of that old *Whig Review* read over to me (who had been a younger college friend of his), in his ramshackle Nassau Street office, that poem of the *Raven*—before

<sup>1</sup> George H. Colton, b. 1818; d. 1847. A poem of his, *Tecumseh*, was published in 1842 by Wiley & Putnam.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

yet it had gone into type; and as he closed with oratorical effect the last refrain, declared with an emphasis that shook the whole mass of his flaxen locks—"that is amazing—amazing!" It surely proved so; and how little did that clever and ambitious editor (who died only two years later) think that one of his largest titles to remembrance would lie in his purchase and issue of that best known poem of Edgar Poe!

If the author had been secured a couple of pennies only for each issue of that bit of verse, all his pecuniary wants would have been relieved, and he secure of a comfortable home; but this was not to be. From this time forth he came into more intimate relations with those who were working on literary lines in New York. Willis befriended him frankly and honorably; Briggs became a quasi partner in some journal interests; Godey and Sartain and Graham looked after him from the Quaker city with admiring friendliness; in the coteries which used to gather at the rooms of Miss Anna Lynch (Mme. Botta), he would have met and did meet the sedate and well-read Mr. Tuckerman, with Mrs. Kirkland of the *New Home*; the brothers Duyckinck would have been there, and poor Fenno Hoffman; perhaps also Halleck, and Drs. Francis, Dewey, and

## HOME AT FORDHAM

Hawks—with possibly that loiterer upon the stage—Fenimore Cooper.

### FORDHAM AND CLOSING SCENES

IN 1846, when cherries were a-bloom, we learn that Poe (straitened then as always) took possession of a little "story and a half" house upon the heights of Fordham, which within a year was still standing. There, in a desolate room, his young wife contended—as she had done for six years now—with a disease that put a pretty hectic glow upon her cheek, and an arrow of pain into every breath she drew. On her best days she walked with him; and other days, and far into nights, with whose shades he consorted familiarly, he sauntered along Fordham heights, and down, in south-westerly way under shaded country roads, to the High-Bridge promenade—between protective balustrades—from which he could look upon the winding streak of Harlem River below, and upon the southern pinnacles and witnesses of a city, whose hum and roar were dimmed by distance.

Here the poet elaborated in his night strolls those theories and brilliant phantasies which took form at last in the book he called *Eureka*.

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

It purported to be a poetic solution of the secrets of creation. Nothing was too large for his grapple; and he nursed with tenderness the metaphysic phantasms that started into view when he wrestled with such problems.

Meantime he is busy upon more merchantable magazine material in the shape of notes upon the *Literati*, and with those scalding *Marginalia* which invited the thrusts and abuses of a good many of his fellow-workers. The amiable Longfellow, with Theodore Fay, Ellery Channing, and Margaret Fuller, are among those who catch some of the deeper thrusts of his critical blade; while there are many poetesses, young and old, who are dandled and lulled in the lap of his flattering periods.

The winds were bleak on Fordham heights in that winter of 1846-47; visitors speak of that wasting girl-wife wrapped (for warmth) in her husband's cloak, with a "tortoise-shell cat gathered to her bosom" and the mother "chafing the cold feet." Again and again she touches the gates of death, and rallies; even so, Leigeia in that horrific story of the weird lady, with the "black abounding tresses," cheats her lover with ever new, and ever broken promise of life!

# The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether.

By Edgar A. Poe.

During the autumn of 18—, while on a tour through the extreme Southern provinces of France, my route led me within a few miles of a certain Maison de Santé, or private Mad-House, about which I had heard much, in Paris, from my medical friends. As I had never visited a place of the kind, I thought the opportunity too good to be lost; and so proposed to my travelling companion (a gentleman with whom I had made casual acquaintance, a few days before) that we should turn aside, for an hour or so, and look through the establishment. To this he objected; pleading haste, in the first place, and, in the second, a very usual horror at the sight of a lunatic.

*Facsimile of the manuscript of one of Poe's stories  
From the collection of G. M. Williamson, Esq., of Grand-View-on-Hudson*

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

I don't think the child-wife lamented the approach of death (January, 1847); nor did the mother; but to the "ghoul-haunted" poet, who had lived in regions peopled by shadows, this vanishing of the best he had known of self-sacrificing love, was desolating. He was never the same again.

We have hardly a right to regard what he did after this—whether in way of writing, of love-making, or of business projects—as the work of a wholly responsible creature. It were better perhaps if the story of it all had never been told.

In some one of the swiftly ensuing months—full of want, and of a drugged craziness of impulse—he goes with the manuscript of that poetic Cosmogony, which was to unlock the secrets of the Universe, into the office (161 Broadway) of Mr. Putnam; and by his impassioned, brilliant advocacy almost prevails upon the kindly publisher to believe that his book is to outrank the *Principia* of Newton, and that a first edition of fifty thousand copies was the smallest number that should be considered.

He had his utterance, too, by appointment, on the same theme with a carefully prepared digest of his work, in the old hall of the So-



## EDGAR ALLAN POE

ciety Library (then presided over by the courteous Philip Forbes, second of the Forbes dynasty), upon the corner of Broadway and Leonard Street. The night was stormy, and there were scarce sixty present; but these favored the poet with rapt attention, as he expounded his theories of the making and unmaking of the material universe. I seem to see him again in that gaunt hall, over against the Carleton House (where the Century Club had its beginnings, in the pleasant fore-gathering of the "Column")—the alert, fine, sinewy figure with the broad ivory brow and curling locks; with eyes that appealed by their lustrous earnestness, as he launched away into the subtle and remoter ranges of his topic. That low baritone voice—distinct—full-freighted with feeling, would alone have held one; all its tones were penetrated with the intellectism of the man; and in its more eloquent phrases the talk seemed to be the vibrations of a soul quivering there with its errand.

But did he win the entranced auditors to his faith? Alas, no! There were fine analyses; subtlest burrowings of thought; adroit seizure of rare facts that bolstered his theory; a profuse squandering and spending of the dust of learning—so illumined by his glowing rhetoric

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

that it seemed a golden cloud; but scholars missed those big nuggets of special knowledge which carry weight and make balance good.

Did he see this? And did the growing tremor in his hand, in his lip, in his whole presence betray it? Or were these tremors only the sequence of some drug-indulgence of yesternight?

The strange poem of *Ulalume* in its last form belongs to those latest years—with its doleful, unreal figures, flitting down the “ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.” So does that other wonderful bit of word-music which he called *The Bells*, whose tinkle and clanging notes he marvellously wrought into waves of sound—carrying echoes wherever bells are now—or ever will be—jangled.

There is a brilliant phosphorescent glitter in all his touches; but, somehow, we do not keep them in mind, as we keep in mind a summer sunrise. Humanities are lacking; figures are wrought in ivory; even the blood-stains upon the robes of the Madame Madeleine in that last horrific scene of the *House of Usher* are dreadfully out of place; such phantasms never bleed. We come nowhere upon any Miltonic spur “to labor and to wait;” no “Footsteps of

## LAST DAYS

Angels" beat a path toward Beulah—but rather decoy one toward the "dank tarn of Auber."

In the critical talk of Poe there was a free and a perfervid utterance which made for him doubtless many enemies; but enemies can never bury real forces or real merit. In all that respects the technicalities of verse, there were in him such art of clever adaptation, and measurement of word-forces and word-collocation, that no enmities can beat down or bewray his triumphs.

All juggleries of sound are under his mastery; all the resonance of best brazen instruments—with here and there a pathetic touch of some "Lost Lenore" breaking in—like a tender bird-note; but there are no such other heart-healing melodies—Miltonian, Wordsworthian, Shakespearian—as not only bewitch the ear, but hang hauntingly in our hearts.

Again, and in highest praise of this erratic genius, it must be said, that in his pages—even in the magical renderings of Baudelaire—there is no lewdness; no beastly double-meanings; not a line to pamper sensual appetites: he is as clear and cool as Arctic mornings.

After his Virginia had gone from his home there was not so much lingering there for Poe:

## AMERICAN LANDS & LETTERS

there were sudden, quick bursts of travel—to Providence, to Lowell, to Boston, to Baltimore; always the old dreams of a great fine journal of his own; always the brilliant forecast of wealth and ease and jewels; always the adoring obeisance at the feet of clever beautiful women who had jewels of verse or jewels of praise at command; always the fluttering promises (in letters) to that kindly Mrs. Clemm—who is keeping the hearth warm in his old home—that he is to bring back a bride there on the morrow, or the next morrow; always the promises break down, and so do his failing forces. At last, word reaches the good motherly kinswoman at Fordham that the end has come; it happened at Baltimore; her boy, Edgar, has been picked up unconscious in the street—has been taken to a hospital, and has died there (October 7, 1849).

There are marble memorials of him which will be guarded and cherished; but there is no *Adonais*, no heart-shaking *Lycidas*, no murmurous beat of such lament and resignation as belong to *In Memoriam*. Only the *Raven*, "never-flitting," still keeps up from year to year, and will, from century to century—that wailing dirge of—"Never more!"

## INDEX

- ABBOTT, JACOB, 129  
 Abbott, John S. C., 129  
 Adams, John Quincy, 17  
 Alcott, Bronson, 114; Carlyle's opinion of, 114; his "Orphic Sayings," 116; at Concord, 116  
 Alcott, Miss Louisa, 114  
 Allen, Dr. William, 129  
 Allston, Washington, 179  
 Allston, Colonel William, 13  
 Allston, Governor Joseph, 13  
*American Monthly*, 67  
*American Whig Review*, 237  
*Atlantic, The*, 210  
 Bancroft, George, at Harvard, 18; in Europe, 19; his volume of poems, 20; Collector for the Port of Boston, 28; first volumes of his history, 28; his marriage, 29; comes to New York to live, 30; as office-holder and diplomat, 31 *et seq.*; his home at Newport, 34  
 Bartlett, John R., 76; his "Dictionary of Americanisms," 77; his bookshop, 76  
 Benjamin, Park, 81, 221  
 Bird, Robert Montgomery, 80; his "Sparticus," 81  
*Boston Recorder*, 63, 67  
 Bowdoin College, 129; Longfellow at, 175  
 Breck, Samuel, his "Recollections," 8  
 Bridge, Horatio, 130; letter to Hawthorne, 133  
 Brook Farm, 98  
 Browning, Robert, 158  
 Browning, Mrs., 111, 158, 166  
 Brownson, Orestes, 107, 123  
 Burr, Theodosia, 13  
 Bushnell, Horace, 47; at college, 48; as a preacher, 49; his theology, 50; his sermons, 53; his character, 56; as a literary artist, 57; his love of nature, 61; 83  
 Butler, Fanny Kemble, 143  
 Calhoun, John C., 13  
 Carey, Henry C., as a publisher, 7

## INDEX

- Carlyle and Emerson, 88; *Emancipator, The*, 104, 120  
     his opinion of Emerson's "Nature," 90  
 Chandler, Joseph R., 8  
 Channing, Wm. Henry, 103  
 Cheever, Rev. George B., 130  
 Chicago, early days of, 16  
 Child, Mrs. Lydia Maria, 104  
*Christian Examiner*, 82  
 Clarke, James Freeman, 218; his "Ten Great Religions," 218  
 Cogswell, Dr. Joseph, 22; at the Astor Library, 26  
 Congressional Library, 4  
 Craigie House, Longfellow at, 179  
 Cranch, Christopher, 104  
 Cushing, Caleb, 81; and Whittier, 191; his "Notes from the Netherlands," 191  
 Dana, Charles A., 103  
 Dante, Longfellow's translation of, 184  
 Darley, F. O. C., his illustrations for "Margaret," 198  
*Democratic Review*, 133  
*Dial, The*, 110, 114, 117  
 "Dictionary of Americanisms," Bartlett's, 77  
 Dwight, John S., 103  
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 84; his boyhood days, 85; ordained, 85; as a preacher and pastor, 86; visits Carlyle, 87; at Concord, 88; his "Nature," 89 *et seq.*; his home at Concord, 92; his address at Harvard, 94; Holmes's biography of, 95; invited to Brook Farm, 98; his opinion of Alcott, 114; 116 *et seq.*; second visit to England, 120; his "English Traits," 120; his death, 122  
 "Evangeline," Longfellow's, 182  
 "Fanshawe," Hawthorne's, 133  
 Fay, Theodore, 68  
 Felton, Professor, 178  
 Fields, James T., 142  
 Fordham, Poe's cottage at, 239  
 Franklin Institute, the, 12  
 Fuller, Miss Margaret, 109; her precocity, 109; talks with Emerson, 109; and *The Dial*, 110; visits Europe, 111; marries the Marquis Ossoli, 111; her tragic death, 113; 124

## INDEX

- Garrison, Wm., 119; and Whittier, 190  
*Gentleman's Magazine*, 236  
 "Gordon Pym," Poe's, 234  
 Gowans, William, 234  
 Greeley, Horace, 110, 219; his early struggles, 220; starts the *New Yorker*, 220; his character, 222; his love for farming, 223; the author's visit to him, 224; his tree-chopping, 224; nominated for the Presidency, 225; his death, 226  
 "Greyslaer," Hoffman's, 77  
 Grimké, Thomas Smith, 79  
 "Guy Rivers," Simms's, 78  
  
*Harbinger, The*, 101  
 Hawthorne, at Brook Farm, 103; 124; his boyhood days, 126; at Sebago Lake, 126; his *Spectator*, 127; at Bowdoin College, 128; his "Fanshawe," 133; his "Twice Told Tales," 134; as weigher and gauger, 134; he marries, 135; his "Mosses from an Old Manse," 136; his love for solitude, 137; appointed surveyor at Salem Custom-House, 139; his "Scarlet Letter," 139; his life in the Berkshires, 143; his "House of Seven Gables," 145; a comparison with Stevenson, 145; his "Blithedale Romance," 146; his religion, 147; at Wayside, 149; appointed consul at Liverpool, 149; his personality, 150; in England, 152; in Rome, 157; his "Marble Faun," 158; home again, 159; his attempts at farming, 160; his death, 164; "Marble Faun," 167  
 Headley, J. T., 143  
 "Hiawatha," Longfellow's, 182  
 Hilliard, George, 134, 140, 178  
 Hoffman, Charles F., 77, 238  
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 203; his "Poems," 204; the author's copy of his "Poems," 204; at Harvard, 206; in Europe, 208; professor at Dartmouth, 208; at the Harvard Medical School, 209; his "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," 210; an estimate of, 211  
 Hone, Philip, 4; sells his house in New York, 11  
 Hosack, Dr., 5

## INDEX

- James, G. P. R., 143  
 James, Rev. Henry, 96  
 Jefferson, ex-President, 4  
*Journal of Music*, Dwight's, 103  
 Judd, Sylvester, 197; his noble character, 198; his "Margaret," 198  
 Kennedy, John P., 80; his friendship with Poe, 232  
 Kirkland, John Thornton, 18  
*Knickerbocker Magazine*, 81, 133  
 Lathrop, Mrs., 160  
 Little Women, 123  
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 130; his youth, 175; goes to Europe, 176; his "Outremer," 176; Professor at Bowdoin, 177; in Europe again, 177; his "Hyperion," 178; a Harvard professor, 178; his "Voices of the Night," 179; buys Craigie House, 181; "Evangeline," 182; "Hiawatha," 182; "Kavanagh," 183; retires from his professorship, 183; his "Dante," 183; his death, 188  
 Longstreet, Judge Augustus B., 16  
 Lowell, James Russell, succeeds Longfellow, 183; 236  
 Lynch, Miss Anna, 238  
 "Margaret," Sylvester Judd's, 198 *et seq.*  
 Marsh, George P., 35; his boyhood days, 36; at college, 36; in Congress, 38; in the Orient, 39; his lectures, 40; his "Man and Nature," 40; Minister to Italy, 42; his death, 45  
 Melville, Herman, 144; "Omoo," "Typee," and "Moby Dick," 144  
 Morris, George P., friendship with Willis, 68  
*New England Magazine*, 210  
*New England Review*, 190  
*New Yorker, The*, 220 *et seq.*  
*New York Mirror*, 68, 77, 237  
*New York Review*, 26  
*New York Tribune*, 110, 220, 222  
 Norton, Dr. Andrews, 18  
 Parker, Theodore, 104 *et seq.*; 124  
 "Parley," "Peter," 133  
 Peabody, Miss Sophia, 135



## INDEX

- Pierce, Franklin, 130, 131, 149; present at Hawthorne's death, 164
- Poe, Edgar Allan, 226; his parents, 227; his adoption, 228; at school in England, 228; at the University of Virginia, 229; "Tamerlane," 230; in the Army, 230; on the *Southern Literary Messenger*, 233; his marriage to Virginia Clemm, 233; goes to New York, 234; goes to Philadelphia, 235; his book on Conchology, 235; domestic affairs, 236; his "Raven," 237; his home at Fordham, 239; his literary criticisms, 240; his wife's illness, 240; his Cosmogony, 242; "Ulalume" and "The Bells," 244; an estimate of Poe, 244; his death, 244
- Polk, President, 139
- Porter, Noah, 217
- Portfolio, The*, 6
- Prentice, George D., 190
- Quincy, Josiah, 208
- "Raven," Poe's, 237
- Reed, Professor Henry, 219
- Ripley, George, 98; starts Brook Farm, 99; with the *Tribune*, 101; his opinion of Hawthorne, 102
- Round Hill School, 22 *et seq.*
- Sanderson, John, his "American in Paris," 6
- Simms, William Gilmore, 78
- Society Library, The, 12, 242
- Southern Literary Messenger*, 233
- Sparks, Jared, 18
- Stephens, John L., 75; monument to, 76
- Stevenson, R. L., Hawthorne compared with, 145
- Story, W. W., 157
- "Tamerlane," Poe's, 230; fabulous price for, 230
- Thompson, George, 192
- Thoreau, Henry David, 117, 136; his scholarship, 168; his Walden experience, 169; at Emerson's home, 170; his lectures, 171; as a reformer, 171; his "Excursions," 172; his literary position, 172; Emerson on Thoreau, 174
- Ticknor, George, at Harvard, 18

## INDEX

- Ticknor, W. D., 150; his death, 164  
*United States Gazette*, 8  
 Virginia, University of, 4  
 Ware, William, 81; his "Letters from Palmyra," 81; his "Probus," 81; comparison of his work with "Quo Vadis," 82  
 Webster, Noah, 180  
 Whittier, John Greenleaf, his birthplace, 188; his youth, 189; attracts Garrison's attention, 190; and the *New England Review*, 190; as politician, 191; at Amesbury, 191; his anti-slavery opinions, 192 *et seq.*; estimate of Whittier, 195; his New Englandism, 195  
 Wilde, Richard Henry, his Italian studies, 14; discovers Giotto's portrait of Dante, 14; his verse, 15  
 Willis, Nathaniel P., 62; his "Absalom," 63; his social life, 63; as a poet, 65; journalist and man of the world, 66; goes to Europe for the *Mirror*, 68; his "Pencilings by the Way," 68; in the Mediterranean, 69; meets Landor, 70; in England, 70; his social accomplishments, 71; residence in New York, 72; at "Idlewild," 74; his death, 75; 84, 237, 238  
 Woolsey, President, 217 *et seq.*  
*Youth's Companion*, 67

## CHRONOLOGIC NOTES

- 1800 Population of United States, 5,500,000; New York City, 65,000; Philadelphia, 40,000; Boston, 25,000. JOHN ADAMS, President, having succeeded to General Washington in 1797. Capital removed from Philadelphia to Washington, D. C., in 1800, when the city had only 3,000 inhabitants. *Bowdoin College* in the throes of its beginning; but only in 1802 its Mass Hall ready for lodgers. Birth-year of MACAULAY and of GEORGE BANCROFT.
- 1801 THOMAS JEFFERSON elected President (by Congress), John Marshall, Chief Justice. Union of Great Britain and Ireland.
- 1802 West Point School established. Ohio admitted to Union. Birth of HORACE BUSHNELL. First issue of *Edinburgh Review*. Napoleon Bonaparte elected Consul for ten years.
- 1803 Louisiana purchase (\$15,000,000). Birth of EMERSON. Fulton tries steamboat on the Seine.
- 1804 Expedition of Lewis and Clark. Napoleon proclaimed Emperor. BURR kills HAMILTON. Birth of HAWTHORNE.
- 1806-7 Trial of BURR for treason.
- 1807 Fight between "Leopard" and "Chesapeake." FULTON's steamer "Clermont" sails on Hudson. Birth of JOHN G. WHITTIER and of N. P. WILLIS. Boston Athenæum founded.
- 1808 Slave trade prohibited by Congress. Birth of LOUIS NAPOLEON.

## CHRONOLOGIC NOTES

- 1809 JAMES MADISON succeeds JEFFERSON. Battle of Wagram. Birth of LINCOLN, O. W. HOLMES, President BARNARD, MENDELSSOHN, and of GLADSTONE. IRVING's *New York*.
- 1810 Revolt of Spanish Colonies in America. Birth of MARGARET FULLER, THEODORE PARKER, and of ASA GRAY. Population of United States, 7,250,000. THOMAS's *History of Printing* published.
- 1811 Birth of HORACE GREELEY, EDGAR POE, also of HENRY BARNARD (prominent educational writer), and of NOAH PORTER.
- 1812 War against Great Britain. Napoleon invades Russia. *Childe Harold* and Niebuhr's *History of Rome* appear. Louisiana a State. American forces invade Canada. Birth of Mrs. STOWE. Antiquarian Society, at Worcester, Mass., established.
- 1813 Fight of "Shannon" and "Chesapeake." Robert Southey made Laureate.
- 1814 Capture and burning of the Capitol by British. McDonough's victory on Lake Champlain. Napoleon abdicates. MOTLEY, the historian, born. Treaty of Ghent. "Hartford Convention."
- 1815 Battle of Waterloo. Battle of New Orleans.
- 1816 Indiana admitted. BOLIVAR prominent in South American wars.
- 1817 MONROE succeeds President MADISON. Mississippi admitted. MOORE's *Lallah Rookh*. THOREAU born. President Day succeeds Dr. Dwight at YALE.
- 1818 United States flag adopted. Illinois admitted. Seminole war begins.
- 1819 Alabama admitted. Republic of Colombia established under Bolivar. Congress of Vienna. Birth of VICTORIA. Steamer "Savannah" crosses the Atlantic. Birth of LOWELL, MELVILLE, WHIPPLE, HOLLAND, and WHITMAN.
- 1820 Maine admitted. Spain cedes Florida. New

## CHRONOLOGIC NOTES

- York Mercantile Library established. IRVING'S *Sketch-Book*. Missouri compromise. Population of United States, 9,600,000.
- 1821 Cooper's *Spy* published. Pennsylvania Mercantile Library established. Dr. WILLIAM ALLEN elected President of Bowdoin.
- 1822 Birth of General Grant. Maine Historical Society established at Brunswick.
- 1823 Cooper's *Pilot* and *Pioneers*. Birth of PARKMAN. Monroe Doctrine dates from 1823.
- 1824 Visit of Lafayette. Laying of corner-stone to Bunker Hill Monument. Oration by WEBSTER. Birth of GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.
- 1825 JOHN QUINCY ADAMS succeeds President MONROE. Opening of Erie Canal. Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*. Birth of BAYARD TAYLOR. Historical Society, Hartford, Conn., incorporated.
- 1826 Death of JEFFERSON and JOHN ADAMS on 15th of July.
- 1827 POE'S *Tamerlane* and Miss SEDGWICK'S *Hope Leslie*.
- 1828 HAWTHORNE'S first romance of *Fanshawe*.
- 1829 ANDREW JACKSON succeeds QUINCY ADAMS. "Spoils" system comes into vogue. QUINCY succeeds KIRKLAND at Harvard. First "double-sheet" number of London *Times* issued.
- 1830 Death of GEORGE IV. Famous debate of WEBSTER and HAYNE. United States population at this date, 12,866,000. Louis Philippe, King of France; Charles X. flies.
- 1831 GARRISON'S *Liberator* established. Indiana Historical Society, also Historical Society at Cincinnati, Ohio.
- 1832 Banquet to WASHINGTON IRVING on return from Europe. Charles and Fanny Kemble play in New York. BRIGHAM YOUNG joins the Mormons. Death of WALTER SCOTT.

## CHRONOLOGIC NOTES

- 1833 South Carolina completes longest line of railroad (at that date) in the world. Trade to China opened.
- 1834 HORACE GREELEY (with others) establishes *New Yorker*. Romish convent burned at Charlestown, Mass., by an anti-Popish mob. First vol. of Bancroft's *United States History*.
- 1835 Bennett's New York *Herald* established. Great fire in New York. Famous "Moon Hoax" appears in *Sun*. LONGFELLOW'S *Outre-Mer*.
- 1836 Arkansas and Michigan admitted. Death of AARON BURR and of JAMES MADISON. Dr. HOLMES'S first volume of poems issued.
- 1837 VAN BUREN succeeds JACKSON. Great commercial crisis. Suspension of specie payments. HAWTHORNE'S *Twice-Told Tales*. VICTORIA comes to English throne. Independence of Texas recognized.
- 1838 "Great Western" makes first trip (fifteen days) from Bristol. Wilkes's South Sea expedition sails. EMERSON'S address at Divinity Hall.
- 1839 Rebellion in Canada. Daguerre takes first *daguerreotypes*. LONGFELLOW'S *Hyperion*. EMERSON'S *Nature*. LEONARD WOODS succeeds Dr. WILLIAM ALLEN in Presidency of Bowdoin College.
- 1840 Union of the Canadas. Marriage of Victoria. Beginning of New Houses of Parliament. The "*Brook Farm*" project under Dr. RIPLEY. The *Dial* established—edited by Miss Fuller. Census shows United States population of 17,069,000.
- 1841 HARRISON succeeds VAN BUREN. LONGFELLOW'S *Voices of the Night*. New York *Tribune* established.
- 1842 Ashburton Treaty. Brook Farm in operation.
- 1843 Death of NOAH WEBSTER.
- 1844 Oxford Tracts. Drs. Pusey and Newman ar-

## CHRONOLOGIC NOTES

- raigned by Archbishop of Canterbury. MORSE's telegraph "set up."
- 1845 President POLK succeeds TYLER (who filled place of the dead HARRISON). JUDD's *Margaret* appears; also MARGARET FULLER's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*.
- 1846 President WOOLSEY succeeds Dr. DAY at Yale; also EDWARD EVERETT to JOSIAH QUINCY at Harvard. Mexican War. Settlement of Oregon dispute. Texas, Wisconsin, and Iowa join the Union. EMERSON's *Poems*, and HAWTHORNE's *Mosses from an Old Manse*.
- 1847 Capture of Vera Cruz and Mexico. Burning of phalanstery at Brook Farm. Gold discovered in California.
- 1848 Revolutionary spirit active in France and throughout Europe. EMERSON's *Representative Men*. POE's *Eureka*, a prose poem. Free-Soilers nominate VAN BUREN.
- 1849 JARED SPARKS succeeds EDWARD EVERETT at Harvard. General TAYLOR succeeds POLK; he prohibits expedition of American adventurers against Cuba. Riot in New York (Astor Place) occasioned by the playing of the actor Macready.
- 1850 Census shows United States population of 23,200,000. California admitted. HENRY CLAY's *Omnibus Bill* does not end slavery agitation. HAWTHORNE publishes *Scarlet Letter*; MELVILLE his *White Jacket*. In England KINGSLEY issues *Alton Locke*, BULWER his *Harold*, and DICKENS completes *David Copperfield*.
- 1851 First "World's Fair" in Hyde Park, London. Death of AUDUBON and of COOPER. Conspicuous book issues are: *Casa Guidi Windows*, by Mrs. BROWNING; *House of the Seven Gables*, by HAWTHORNE; *Christ in Theology*, by BUSHNELL; and *Stones of Venice*, by RUSKIN.

## CHRONOLOGIC NOTES

- 1852 Death of DANIEL WEBSTER and of HENRY CLAY. Issue of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; also of DICKENS'S *Bleak House*, HAWTHORNE'S *Blithedale Romance*, THACKERAY'S *Esmond*, and READE'S *Peg Woffington*.
- 1853 President PIERCE succeeds TAYLOR (and FILLMORE). JAMES WALKER succeeds JARED SPARKS at Harvard. CURTIS'S *Potiphar Papers*.
- 1854 Commodore PERRY opens Japanese ports. "Ostend Manifesto" and filibustering to Cuba. Struggle for Kansas. Immigration (to United States) reaches number of half a million.
- 1855 VICTORIA and NAPOLEON exchange visits. War with Russia. Bombardment of Sebastopol. PRESCOTT publishes portion of *Philip II*. (left unfinished at his death, in 1859. LONGFELLOW'S *Hiawatha* and CHARLES KINGSLEY'S *Westward Ho!*
- 1856 Death of PERCIVAL and JOHN PIERPONT. Assault on SUMNER in United States Senate Chamber. FREMONT nominated by Free-Soilers. EMERSON'S *English Tracts* and Mrs. BROWNING'S *Aurora Leigh*.
- 1857 Sepoy mutiny in India. President Buchanan succeeds PIERCE. "Dred Scott" decision. Financial panic. THACKERAY'S *Virginians* and HOLLAND'S *Bay Path*.
- 1858 Famous LINCOLN and DOUGLAS debates. First Atlantic cable laid. Minnesota admitted. HOLMES'S *Autocrat* and BUSHNELL'S *Nature of the Supernatural*.
- 1859 JOHN (Ossawatomie) BROWN'S raid upon Harper's Ferry and subsequent execution. WASHINGTON IRVING dies, and DELIA BACON (chief advocate of the Baconian-Shakespeare claim). Liberation of Lombardy. Admission of Oregon.

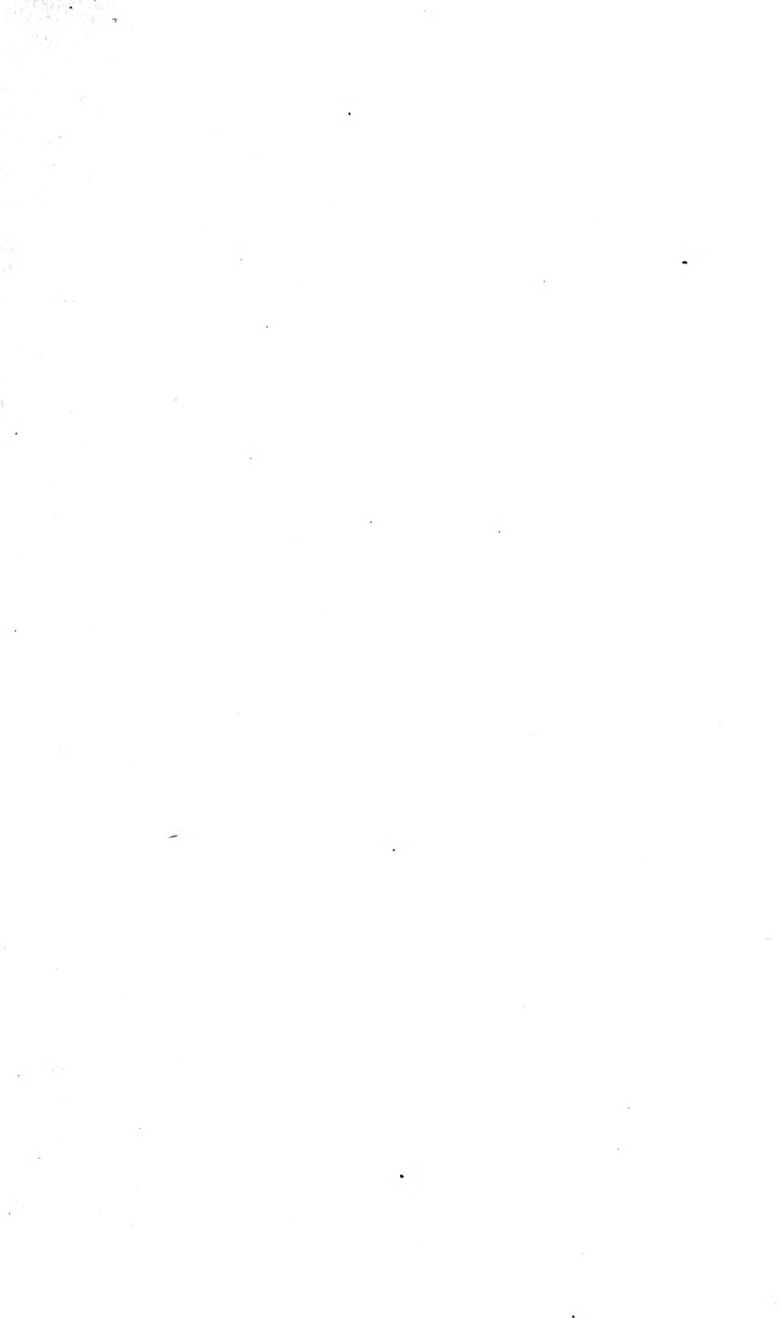


## CHRONOLOGIC NOTES

DICKENS's *Tale of Two Cities*, STOWE's *Minister's Wooing*, and HAWTHORNE's *Marble Faun*.

- 1860 Census shows population of 20,000,000. Professor FELTON succeeds President WALKER at Harvard. "Peter Parley" and Paulding die. EMERSON publishes his *Conduct of Life*; and in the following year begin the Presidency of LINCOLN and the War of Secession.



















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